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Towards 1984

Since the ruling given by Mr Justice Mars-Jones on Monday, the new Official Secrets trial is being conducted with a remarkable hypothesis in view – one no less alarming for having perhaps been implicit in the prosecution from the start. It is proposed that a perfectly well-known fact of European politics – namely, the existence of British signals-intelligence operations in a foreign country, which has already been publicly identified – may be capable of being made into a secret by a British Government assertion to that effect.

It may be said that this is not so remarkable. After all, every trial concerns hypotheses, on which judgment is suspended until the evidence is complete. A man accused of murder is assumed innocent till proven guilty: why, then, should a case about what is or is not an official secret be judged in advance? The difficulty becomes apparent, however, if one tries to modify a well-known rule into the form that would be required: any fact about the Government's activities is secret, until it is proven public.

The guilt or innocence of an accused prisoner is genuinely a mystery until the jury gives its verdict. But there is nothing mysterious about the existence and general purpose of the British operations in the country under discussion. The facts, in general outline at least, are known to every citizen there who cares to inquire. The local government is familiar with them, and any tourist can discover as much – and indeed, it is not necessary to travel so far, for the essence of the matter emerged in examination of the prosecution's own witness in the earlier, abortive Official Secrets trial.

That is, on 7 September in the earlier trial, Major Frederick Everson was brought to discuss, under cross-examination, the 'name, location and specific intelligence rôle' of 9 Signals Regiment, based with its 3rd Squadron intelligence unit at Ayios Nikolaos in Eastern Cyprus – and this was reported in the *Guardian* the following day. Major Everson, who had been called because he was the regiment's security officer when defendant John Berry served there – was reported as agreeing that the regiment's name and location were publicly known. He did maintain that its rôle was secret. But when asked whether he could support that assertion, in view of the fact that the signals-intelligence rôle of the Cyprus base had been described in the press in 1975, Major Everson said that it was 'not within my competence' to answer.

When defence counsel, shortly afterwards, protested at the removal from certain documents of details that had already emerged from Major Everson's evidence, prosecuting counsel John Leonard QC claimed they were

> matters which should properly remain secret. While a lot of people knew about the Cyprus base, he said, it was quite another thing for defence counsel to announce the facts in open court.

On Major Everson's re-appearance for the present trial, Mr Leonard moved in determined fashion to gain support for this principle. After lengthy discussions held in camera, he persuaded Mr Justice Mars-Jones to rule that the name and location of the unit, although discussed in the earlier trial, should be suppressed while taking evidence in the present one. The judge said this did not necessarily mean these facts were secret. But it is alarming enough to think that things even *might* be officially secret which have already been reported from open court.

Clearly, to the prosecution's line of argument, what matters in deciding whether something is 'secret' is not the common-sense question of whether it is well-known, or readily ascertainable. What matters is the official attitude to the information: if the government declines to acknowledge certain of its activities, then they are 'secret', however conspicuous they may be. Sadly, the fact is that a Labour government, in time of peace, has allowed its security advisers and its law officers to try to accelerate our progress towards 1984.

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Notes on Politics and Power

The long-term unemployed: a special case

Frank Field writes: The Prime Minister has promised to do something for the long-term unemployed – those people who have been out of work for more than a year. It seems as though the scheme will be based on the one designed to help school-leavers, which aims to ensure that, by next Easter, all school-leavers will either have a job or be offered training or work experience. But the problems of the long-term unemployed are rather different and some of the government's attempts at training have so far been unimpressive.

The long-term unemployed have been with us for some time, notwithstanding the government's sudden discovery of the problem. Something like 25 per cent of all unemployed males and 15 per cent of all unemployed females have been out of work for over a year. In total they number 334,000 and over four fifths of them are men. The under-twenties comprise less than 4 per cent of the long-term unemployed, compared with over 13 per cent of the total unemployed. Nearly two fifths of the long-term unemployed are between the age of 40 and 59, compared with just a quarter of the total number of people registering for work. And only 4 per cent of unemployed managerial workers have been without work for over a year compared with 19 per cent of manual workers and over half of unemployed general labourers.

The training schemes which exist at the moment are failing significantly: a study earlier this year by the Policy Studies Institute reported that three out of every ten people who receive training at government skill centres fail to get jobs in the trades for which they have been trained.

Mr Callaghan could help the lot of the long-term unemployed at once by giving them equality within the social security system. At the moment the national insurance benefit payable for a two children family is £12 a week less for an unemployed person than it is for the widowed, the old or the disabled. And the long-term unemployed are never eligible for long-term supplementary benefit however long they have been unemployed. Yet within the Cabinet the Prime Minister has resisted attempts to reform both these iniquities.

Socialist victors in Swedish crisis

Francis Castles writes: After only two years in office, Sweden's first non-socialist government in more than four decades resigned late last week after failing to reach agreement on the pace of the domestic nuclear energy programme. Mr Fälldin, Prime Minister and leader of the Centre Party, submitted his resignation when it became clear that he could not persuade his Liberal and Conservative coalition-partners to agree to a referendum on the nuclear issue.

From the moment that a 'bourgeois' coalition was formed in October 1976 it always seemed probable that arguments about the energy programme might bring it to a premature end. The last few weeks of the 1976 election campaign were dominated by the Centre Party's attempt to capture the public imagination – and the environmentalists' vote – by pointing to the dangers of Sweden's ambitious plan for commissioning nuclear generators. Although this helped them win the election, it made for potential government instability, since, on the energy question, the Liberals and Conservatives agreed more with the Social Democrats than with the Centre Party.

Until last week Fälldin managed to paper over the cracks. In 1977 the Nuclear Safety Stipulations Act was passed, stating that activation of the reactors could only take place when the government was satisfied with the safety of re-processing and storage facilities. Now the reactors are ready so the Centre Party proposed the referendum, partly as a device to save time and partly as an attempt to appeal to the people above the heads of the party. With the opinion polls consistently pointing to a Social Democratic victory in next September's election, and the Centre Party as the largest potential loser, the Prime Minister could not afford to weaken his party's image as protector of the environment. Without agreement on a referendum, the resignation was inevitable.

It is difficult to forecast what will happen now. Some suggest that Ola Ullsten, the Liberal leader, might form a minority administration with tacit Social Democratic support. Ullsten, who only recently became Liberal leader, has been Minister of International Development Assistance. His radical stance makes co-operation with Olof Palme a real possibility. On the other hand, the Liberals are the smallest of the bourgeois parties and may not be able to form a viable cabinet. The Centre Party cannot enter into a new coalition without betraying its environmentalist followers, and collaboration between Liberals and Conservatives is bedevilled by memories of past antagonism and disagreements over current policy, such as industrial democracy. The only party to gain from all this is the Social Democrats. Their long record as a natural party of government has been based as much on bourgeois disunity as on their own ability to mobilise working class support at the polls. Their appeal has been that of the one party strong enough to guarantee prosperity, full employment and enhanced welfare. A period of stationary real incomes and rising unemployment has created problems for the non-socialist government; without the unity to rule their prospects for next year's election look decidedly dim.

Scotland's new Nato base

Brian Wilson writes: Is the Ministry of Defence planning to build a Nato base at Stornoway in the Western Isles? Officially, the MoD wants planning permission to extend its wartime airfield to make Stornoway an adequate reserve base in time of national crisis. Unofficially, it is believed, it would make an alternative base for Nato surveillance operations which are now centred on Keflavik in Iceland.

The political threat to Nato in Iceland is much less now than it was in 1974, when the left-wing coalition was in the process of negotiating a phased Nato withdrawal. The new left-wing government is merely undertaking a review of defence strategy. But the strategic arguments for switching from Keflavik are strong. Professor John Erickson, of the Defence Studies department at Edinburgh University, says: 'If the North of Scotland did not exist it would have had to be invented, for tactical command reasons.'

Professor Erickson envisages that 'mid-range surveillance' which is undertaken from Iceland will become less important as the range of reconnaissance aircraft increases. But, he says, 'short-range surveillance' will intensify. And the north of Scotland happens to be nearest to the egress point of the Soviet ships and aircraft.

The Western Isles Island Council has refused planning clearance to the MoD for the airfield expansion. Now a letter from the ministry has chastised them for holding up 'a very important project. Any delays in its implementation would be a matter of serious concern to us. Our plans are already at an advanced stage'.

French lessons for Chrysler workers

Mary Beale writes: Eric Varley's decision to sanction the Peugeot take-over of Chrysler will cause a massive confrontation between the two entirely different traditions of the British trade unions and the Peugeot management.

In Peugeot's factories there are three trade unions, the communist CGT, the socialist CFDT, and the right wing management staff association the CFT, but only one in ten of the workers is a union member and the closed shop is unknown. The unions play no role in pay negotiations with the management nor are working conditions, track speed and productivity open to negotiation. The last strike at any Peugeot plant was in 1972 when a five week strike over pay resulted in the workers returning without a settlement.

How have Peugeot managed to achieve this apparently ideal state of affairs from the management point of view? Partly, they achieve identification through paternalism. But the strike in 1972 provides a good indication. The management sacked the strikers and refused to reinstate them, intimidated strike supporters' families and paid strike breakers bonuses to continue production. Simon Luis, the CGT organiser at Peugeot described the strike to me and said: 'France is a country of democracy, but here democracy stops at the door'.

The reason behind the silent acquiescence of the workforce is twofold. First, the management urges the CFT, the right wing union, to foster an atmosphere where work is encouraged, and trade unionism discouraged. Trade union organisers are not given promotion and production bonuses, they are given the toughest jobs on the line, and, if organisation continues, are sacked. This situation is allowed to continue because the majority of the workers are immigrants. In the Peugeot plants at Sochaut in conservative rural Eastern France 40 per cent of the 38,000 workforce are immigrants, in the Citroen plants near Paris the rate rises to 76 per cent. Most of the immigrant workers come from Vietnam, Korea, Yugoslavia or North Africa and are dependent on work at

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Peugeot-Citroen for their residence permits. To prevent organisation among immigrants the management employs interpreters who explain the company's industrial relations philosophy firmly to the workers and then continue to supervise them on the production line. Gildas Blanchaud, the Secretary General of the communist trades unions in the Citroen group described them as 'sector agents and political policemen'. The graffiti in the plant lavatories describes them as the SS.

The system of close supervision of workers applies equally to the native French workers. A day absent from the production line on account of illness brings a home visit from the plant doctor. At the regularly held plant elections for a trade union consultative committee, the system of supervision means that elections are effectively rigged by the management. On voting day, the workers are issued with three slips of voting paper with the nominees for each union on a separate slip. After voting the workers have to return the unused slips to the section supervisor. If a CFT right wing slip is returned the worker is penalised for having voted for a communist or socialist representative. The result is usually an overwhelming victory for the CFT. It will be instructive to see how many Peugeot managers are put in Chrysler UK.

Who says council housing costs more?

Stephen Marks writes: With over three million families living in homes that are rotting or over-crowded, and new slums being created faster than old ones are repaired or replaced, the housing crisis shows no signs of going away. For many critics the root of the problem lies in the system we use for subsidising our housing.

A radical version of this analysis is argued in a pamplet*, published recently, by Bernard Kilroy, a housing officer for a London borough who is well-known as a writer and lecturer on housing finances. He sharply criticises the Government's recent housing policy review green paper, which failed to propose any radical changes, and ended up being accused by Michael Heseltine of stealing the Tories' clothes.

With housing subsidies and tax relief to mortgagors now running at a combined total of £2,500 million a year (equal to 15 pence in the pound of all income tax revenue), more is being spent on subsidising housing than on building it. The conventional solution is to soak the council tenant.

The point that mortgage tax relief is a subsidy too is now widely accepted. But Kilroy goes further. He points out that the capital debt on an owner-occupied house is jacked up to current market levels whenever the house changes hands and is remortgaged – on average every seven years. And the cost of tax-relief rises proportionately. But the debt on a council house is fixed at original cost during the life of the house, while rents rise more or less in line with inflation.

So if all new building stopped tomorrow, council housing would end up paying for itself. But the subsidy bill to owner-occupiers would keep on rising as old houses changed hands. As it is, the total volume of mortgage debt trebled in the eight years to the end of 1977, to £32,000 million, and is expected by the Government to rise by a further 50 per cent in real terms in the next ten years. Kilroy asks if just financing the existing owner-occupied stock might not divert capital resources from productive investment elsewhere in the economy.

The proposals in the Government's green paper, Kilroy argues, would put the onus on councils in big cities to justify their new building plans; thus forcing council housing into a 'residual' status, catering only for those who cannot afford owner-occupation, and attaching to the public sector the American-style stigma of 'welfare housing', reserved only for misfits, outcasts and the poor. Meanwhile supply in the private sector would still be decided by the mortgage market – that is, by the sales and re-purchases of existing owners.

Kilroy's answer is a complex package which he labels 'organic reform'. He would taper off tax relief to higher-rate purchasers, and on the dearer properties. And a 'single-annuity' mortgage system would mean that a mortgage would not start again from year one each time the mortgagor moved house. In the council sector, rents would be pooled. Given this policy, he claims, £600 million a year could be saved without increasing rents or cutting capital spending.

What he does not consider is any radical socialist answer to the problem of rising interest rates, which have caused the proportion of housing spending that actually goes on providing homes to fall from 74 per cent in 1968-9 to 38 per cent this year, and means that in over 100 local authorities, interest costs more than what tenants pay in rent.

**Housing Finance – Organic Reform?* LEFTA, 72 Albert Road, London NW1, price £1.

Free Speech

In defence of crying

In the great parliamentary period when women's suffrage was being debated, it was commonplace for Conservatives to offer the opinion that women, while all right in their way, were prone to crack up under stress and should be shielded from burdens of responsibility. This version of chauvinism-by-chivalry (often expressed with less gallantry) is enough to give the lie to current Tory propaganda about their own part in female emancipation. Left to the Tories, there would have been no such thing.

So that's one kind of hypocrisy. But very recently, the *Daily Mirror* seems to have borrowed the Tory plumes. After Margaret Thatcher's incautious interview with *Woman's World*, in which she revealed that she often had a bit of a cry when things got tough, the *Mirror* decided on a raucously pseudo-proletarian approach:

> What would happen if the Russians squeezed West Berlin again? Or put nuclear missiles into Cuba? If war broke out in the Middle East? Or the miners went on strike again?
>
> Would everything stop while she got her hankie out? Lady Eden once said that the Suez Canal flowed through her drawing room at No. 10. With Mrs Thatcher, apparently, that's where the deluge would start.

Yes, yes, except that it was actually Sir Anthony Eden who cracked up and babbled at that stage, while Lady Eden stood stoically by. And everybody knows, or ought to know, that Winston Churchill wept freely under pressure.

There's a slight point of principle here, which is that socialists are always pointing out the yellow tactics of Fleet Street when it comes to coverage of the Labour movement. The one mass-circulation paper which is not bought and paid for by Conservative interests need not stoop to use their tactics and their style. But the main point concerns the peculiar British attitude to tears. Until the Dr Arnold generation of public school soldiers, colonists and politicians, it was not thought unmanly to weep. In Admiral Nelson, it was considered as another confirmation of his humanity. Even the Iron Duke himself shed tears over the stricken fields of the Peninsular campaign. It took the Victorian epoch (and dare one add, the presence of a dominant woman) to outlaw and to feminise such behaviour on the part of men.

In her marvellous essay preface to *The Song of Roland*, Dorothy Sayers discusses Charlemagne's lachrymose response to the news of Roland's death. She says that 'we must not reckon it weakness in him that he is overcome by grief'. She goes on:

> There are fashions in sensibility as in everything else. The idea that a strong man should react to great personal and national calamities by a slight compression of the lips and by silently throwing his cigarette into the fireplace is of very recent origin.

And, come to think of it, more honoured in the breach than in the observance. Here is George Wigg in his memoirs, describing Callaghan at the height of a sterling crisis in 1964:

> Jim Callaghan's lips quivered, his hands shook, he had no idea what had hit him . . . I remember vividly Callaghan mumbling. 'We can't go on. We shall have to devalue'.

Which they didn't, or not for three more disastrous years. So the *Mirror* should watch its step. There will be plenty to cry about if the ghastly woman does get to power.

Christopher Hitchens

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'I am in my own house, so I can shout for as long as I like. Most of these coloured people agree with me.'

„Die Hautfarbe ist wie eine Uniform"

'Skin-colour is like a uniform'

In writing about Enoch Powell, it is the fashion among British journalists to dwell upon his intellectual glamour, his sincerity: 'Brilliant, thoughtful and profound' (Bernard Crick, *Observer*, 23 July); 'Motivated by a profound feeling for nationhood' (Chapman Pincher, *Express*, 2 October). A more realistic picture is offered by this extraordinary interview translated from *Der Spiegel*, the West German weekly. Powell, who is fluent in German, approved the original before publication.

SPIEGEL: Mr Powell, you are the most vociferous and eloquent exponent of the demand that Britain's coloured population should be returned to their homelands. Do you believe that two million coloured Britons represent a threat to the 54 million whites?

POWELL: Everyone believes it, everyone. Even those politicians who do not speak about it believe it. They too fear that a fearful catastrophe may face us if we do not ultimately act.

But how are 3.6 per cent of the population supposed to plunge the other 96.4 per cent into a fearful catastrophe?

Do you know how many Normans crossed the Channel in 1066?

No.

10,000. That is the answer to your question.

One occasion when it really did happen was 10 June 1969. The contemporary caption reads: 'Mr Enoch Powell went to ATV House, Kingsway, this afternoon, to be interviewed for the Thames Television "TODAY" programme . . . on leaving, he was seen by this coloured man who went up and shook his hand'.

But at that time there were only a few hundred thousand Anglo-Saxons in England.

No, no, there were at least a million. There can be no doubt that even such a small minority can have a revolutionary effect.

But the coloured minority have British passports, and all British citizens have equal rights. To repatriate some of them would contravene British laws.

The majority of the coloured people have not only British nationality but that of their country of origin as well, in other words of India, Sri Lanka or Jamaica. The child of an Indian born in England is an Indian by Indian law, and by British law British. If he was repatriated, such a person would thus certainly not become stateless – that alone would contravene natural law.

But why should the coloured people not be allowed to choose their place of residence from between both countries whose nationalities they possess?

That depends on the laws of this country. The majority of Commonwealth states for instance do not tolerate dual nationality but compel people to decide on **one** nationality. We have hitherto been generous enough not to do that, but citizenship laws can be changed, they are a matter for the state concerned alone.

However, many British coloured people regard England as their home, especially if they were born here.

You must be joking.

No, we are certain of this.

Then you are welcome to your certainty. I am certain of the opposite. You cannot tell me that a Sikh who was born here regards England and not the Punjab as his home. What ideas you have!

A coloured child who grows up with white Britons in England, learns English nursery-rhymes and goes to an English school will naturally regard this country as his own.

Yes, yes, no doubt he will. Many of these people do indeed behave like conquerors. Just consider that they own land here, whilst the British in India were not allowed to own land.

What are your concrete proposals with regard to the coloured people? Is parliament to pass a law withdrawing British citizenship from coloured people?

No, no, that would be very German. First of all, these people must recognise that they are aliens. Then one must look at population trends. An official report has now made clear that by the year 2000 the coloured population of England will have doubled. We should therefore then already have four million.

But the island will nevertheless not have been depopulated of whites then.

Of course not. But you must please consider that the coloureds are not distributed over the whole country but are concentrated in a few places. In Greater London between a fifth and a quarter of all births are already coloured. That means that in the course of time a third of the population of London will be coloured, about three and a half million people.

These are certainly impressive figures. But would you tell us please how it is that these coloured people interfere in your private or professional life. Do you meet any?

They meet **me**.

How frightful! Do you feel that to be a threat to you, or merely a nuisance?

Now listen carefully. When coloured people meet me, they only say, 'May I shake your hand, Mr Powell? I am proud to meet you, Mr Powell. You are doing the right thing, Mr Powell. Just carry on, Mr Powell'.

Now it is **you** *who are joking.*

No. I am asking you really to listen exactly to what I am saying.

And we are asking you not to shout so.

I am in my own house, so I can shout for as long as I like. Most of these coloured people agree with me.

If that were so, why do these people not go home of their own free will, instead of forever wanting to shake you by the hand here in London?

I can answer that. A year ago, coloured people in Southall were asked if they would go back. A young Sikh replied 'No, we shall not go back. We shall stay for another 20 or 30 years, until disorder breaks out. Only then will we go home.' I believe that was very revealing.

Many coloured people definitely do not want to go back to their homelands under any circumstances whatever, just as a large

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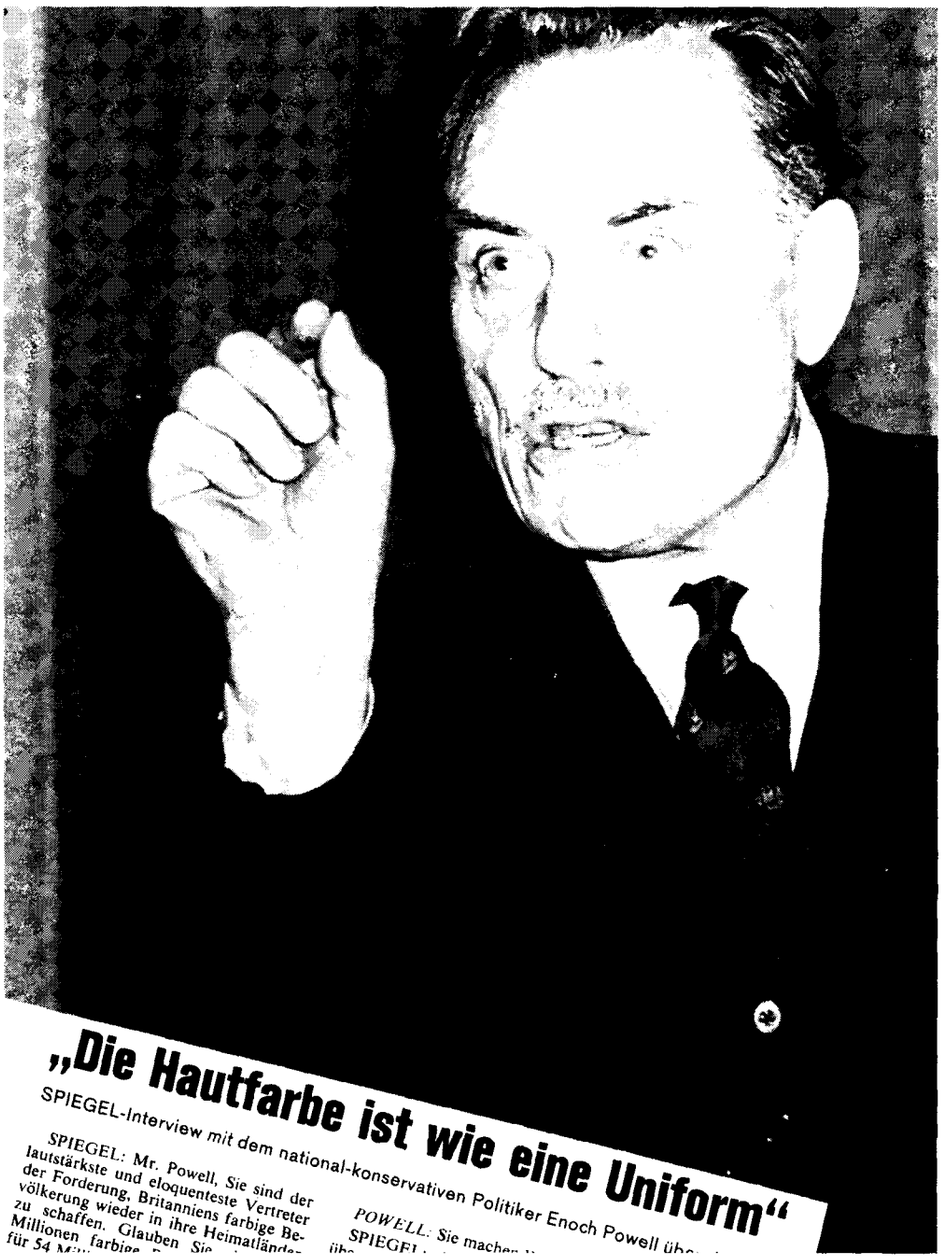

„Die Hautfarbe ist wie eine Uniform"

SPIEGEL-Interview mit dem national-konservativen Politiker Enoch Powell üb...

SPIEGEL: Mr. Powell, Sie sind der lautstärkste und eloquenteste Vertreter der Forderung, Britanniens farbige Bevölkerung wieder in ihre Heimatländer zu schaffen. Glauben Sie ... Millionen farbige ... für 54 M...

POWELL: Sie machen ...

SPIEGEL: ...

number of the German Jews who emigrated to England do not want to go back to Germany.

I understand that very well. The Jews were robbed of all their rights.

The Asians in Kenya, Uganda and Malawi had a similar experience. They came to England because they were persecuted in Africa.

Many of them are going back all the same.

Certainly not to Uganda.

But to Kenya for example and to Tanzania.

But what if their home country does not want those returning?

Do you mean to say that an Indian who has lived and worked in this country would not be welcome back in India? Do you really mean that? At most that would be the case with subversive elements who have had their training here in England.

Mr Powell, when one thinks how much the coloured people in England are disadvantaged – in employment, in housing, in education, in almost every field of daily life – do you not feel that these people are enduring their fate most patiently?

They are not discriminated against, at least not by law, as far as I am aware. The law of course should protect and punish everyone equally. But in private life people just do distinguish between their own kind and aliens, Jews and Christians. All mankind does this.

In some countries they do it more, in others less.

At all events the coloured people have come here, and they have stayed here. Should I expect, if I came to Germany, to be treated like a German? Answer that!

You know full well that that is a false analogy.

Then let us take China.

This analogy is equally false. Was China ever part of the British Empire?

Oh, I see. If you mean that British rule over India should be restored, that is another matter. And something else: you spoke of patience. I am now thinking of the patience the people in Wolverhampton needed when they saw the face of their town being altered over the past 20 years until it was unrecognisable. I am thinking of the patience of the people of this country who no longer dare to step out of their front doors after dark because thugs will steal their wallets. Patience is not the right word for this, self-destruction would be better.

You speak as though there were no excesses by whites against blacks. Do you see a connection between race and violence?

When a separate and strange population establishes numerical ascendancy in an area, then the very nature of its separateness and self-identification promotes the exploitation of the violent and criminal impulses which are common to humnaity; and there is nothing strange in this. It is not Powell who says this. You can observe it anywhere. And of course, colour is part of this, because colour is the uniform.

When one sees the street-battles in London's East End, with the fascist 'National Front' and Anti-Nazi-demonstrators attacking each other, and the police trying to keep the combatants apart, such scenes recall the last days of the Weimer Republic in Germany. Might racial conflict become a danger for democracy in England?

The greatest danger for democracy in England is the EEC and the abdication by the British parliament which it entails. The second greatest danger is nationalism, particularly of the Scots. Only after some years, but not so very many years, could the presence of coloured MPs perhaps become incompatible with the functioning of the British parliament.

Maurice Ludmer, editor of the anti-racist periodical 'Searchlight', says that racism in England is no coincidence but the natural consequence of 350 years of colonial history. Do you share that view?

It is very probable that our island situation has made us British more sensitive to aliens than other nations. That would be quite natural for an island people. It is very much our nature to differentiate between what is British and what is not.

Ten years ago Edward Heath dismissed you as Conservative shadow defence-minister because he felt the tone of the demands you were already making then for the repatriation of coloured people to be racist. Heath's successor as leader of the party Margaret Thatcher, has herself now raised the race-question as an issue for the elections which will probably take place in the autumn. You have not changed your point of view. Do you foresee a comeback for yourself in the party?

If the Conservative Party believed it could gain votes, it would not only kill its own grandmother but eat her too.

You called British politicians 'pigmies'. Were you also referring to Mrs Thatcher when you said that?

I was making a very general comment.

Were you including her?

I am excluding no one.

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Anna Coote: The Tories' strange affair with women

The female vote is one of the Tories' greatest assets. No matter what they do, it seems, women keep on voting for them. According to the latest polls, if men stayed away from the ballot box at the next election, the Tories could expect a nine per cent lead over Labour. More women think Callaghan would be better at leading the country, but the majority still intends to vote Conservative. What have the Tories done to deserve such unswerving loyalty?

It is hard to find much to commend them in the record of the Heath government. A few laws were passed which removed some indefensible injustices without incurring much expense: the Guardianship of Minors Act, for example, gave both parents equal guardianship of their children, and the Criminal Justice Act ended the property qualification for jury service so that women and men could serve in equal numbers. But there was a strong consensus in favour of these changes and Ted Heath had no opportunity to mount a white charger and push them past angry Labour opponents.

The same government gave us the Family Income Supplement (FIS). This attempt to solve the problem of family poverty encapsulates many of the worst elements of Tory social policy. FIS is means-tested, it shores up low wages and it is discriminatory: a woman cannot claim it unless she is a single parent or her husband is actually incapable of earning a living.

To recall Sir Keith Joseph's pension plan, which the Tories scheduled for introduction in 1975, might embarrass even Margaret Thatcher today. Based on actuarial calculations rather than any assessment of need, the Joseph scheme pegged women's earnings-related pensions at a lower level than men's in order to compensate for their longer life expectancy. If the Tories had remained in office, women would now be looking forward to pensions some 30 per cent lower than those drawn by men who had worked in the same jobs for the same pay.

When they came to compile their 1977 Campaign Guide, the Tories were evidently hard-pressed to find any trumpets of their own to blow. Instead, they resorted to invention: 'The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 stems largely from the Consultative Document *Equal Opportunities for Men and Women*, which was published in September 1973 by the last Conservative Government.' If that document did anything to inspire the 1975 Act, it was by stiffening the resolve of those who wanted a very different law from that which it proposed. *Equal Opportunities* aimed to outlaw discrimination in employment only; it did nothing new to tackle discrimination in education, nor discrimination in housing or in the provision of goods, facilities or services. All these areas were covered by the law passed in 1975 under a Labour government.

The Tories also claim to have invented child benefit: 'The Labour Government has adopted one aspect of the Tax Credit Scheme,' says the 1978 supplement to their Campaign Guide. It ought to be remembered that the original Tory proposals for tax credits *excluded* supplementary benefit claimants (and thereby large numbers of single mothers) from the provisions for child tax credits. Moreover, they proposed, in the case of two-parent families, to pay the credits to the main breadwinner – i.e. the husband. Only after a determined campaign by the women's movement and organisations such as the Child Poverty Action Group did the Heath government concede that child credits should be paid automatically to the mother.

If there were a simple correlation between passing laws and winning votes, then Labour (despite other shortcomings) would surely deserve more support from women. A Labour government was responsible not only for the Sex Discrimination Act, but also for the Equal Pay Act, for the Employment Protection Act which introduced paid maternity leave and protection from unfair sacking during pregnancy, and for the Social Security Act of 1975, which greatly improves the pension prospects of women who interrupt their employment to raise children.

It was due to the backing of a Labour government that Jo Richardson's Domestic Violence Bill got on to the statute book. And it was a Labour Home Secretary, Roy Jenkins, who changed the Immigration Rules to allow British women married to foreigners to extend their right of residence to their husbands. William Whitelaw has promised to revoke this last measure if his party wins the election. 'It surely cannot be unreasonable to argue,' said he last April,

'that in accordance with the customs of Europe and the Indian sub-continent, the abode of the husband in a marriage should normally be viewed as the natural place of residence of the family.'

Both parties have been vying with each other to be seen as champions of the family. But the Tories were first off the mark and are still shouting louder. Their 'family policy' is more carefully thought-out and more closely integrated with the rest of their social policy. This may sound like good news for women and a worthy way of attracting votes. 'The family has been the foundation for virtually every free society known to history,' declared Patrick Jenkin at last year's Tory conference. 'It possesses strength and resilience, not least in adversity. Loyalty to the family ranks highest of all, higher even than loyalty to the State.' Words to warm the hearts of women who have worked hard (unpaid) all their lives for their children and menfolk. But what does Mr Jenkin want to *do* with this noble institution?

Young mothers should not be forced to go out to work simply to make ends meet, he says. Men with wives at home should get extra tax relief to encourage them to stay there. 'But finance is not the only argument. The pressures on young wives to go out to work devalue motherhood itself . . . Parenthood is a very skilled task indeed and it must be our aim to restore it to the place of honour it deserves'. Tory 'family policy' begins to emerge. Jenkin goes on: 'The family is not just mum, dad and the kids . . . the family must be the front-line defence when Gran needs help.'

While championing the family – and specifically the conventional family where dad is the breadwinner and mum looks after dad, kids, house and presumably Gran as well, the Tories have made it clear that they are determined to cut public spending. However, demand for public service is expected to increase – due to greater unemployment, an expanding population of over-75s and a rise in the number of births when the babies born in the 'bulge' of the 1950s and 1960s reach child-bearing age.

If the Tories are prepared to meet these increasing demands *and* fulfil their promises to increase public spending on certain items (especially the police and the armed services), to hold down the level of public spending and to make substantial tax cuts, then the cuts in *some* areas will have to be very drastic indeed. Housing and the Health Service are already marked for the chop and the first victims will be working class women who will have the job of looking after deteriorating homes and caring for sick relatives who cannot find hospital beds. The Tories say they will save money by attacking 'waste, duplication and bureaucracy', but where exactly do they think they will find it? Patrick Jenkin gave one indication when he replied to the TUC's *Under Fives* report on 17 June: 'The really important thing about day-care for the under-fives is that it should be firmly linked to family life and to the community and not become yet another bureaucracy.' The pre-school playgroup movement provided an invaluable community service, he said, and was 'of as much benefit to mothers as to children . . . bringing the advantages of day-care for the under-fives together with involvement of

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often isolated and depressed young mothers, to deprived families, for which the only alternative may be increasing isolation and a course of Valium! '

So there it is. The family must be preserved in order that public services may be replaced by unpaid female labour. Mum will stand in for the social worker, the health visitor, the nursery teacher and a range of other paid professionals. Those who will be put out of work as Mum takes over are mostly women anyway – and would be better employed at home being loyal to their families. And if they should happen to get lonely or depressed (though why they should in the bosom of such a magnificent institution is not explained), what better pick-me-up than a voluntary stint at the local play-group?

When the Tories took over the council in Wandsworth, South London, a nursery building programme was frozen and vacancies in the social services department remained unfilled. They appear to mean what they say.

The beauty of the family policy, as far as the Tories are concerned, is that it may also help them hang on to the female vote. If women are kept isolated in their homes, with their information sifted through the BBC, ITV and the Tory Press, they may be slower to cotton on to what their favourite party is doing to them.

However, one incident which might cheer Jim Callaghan occurred in Blackburn, Lancashire a couple of weeks ago. Denise Willan, an otherwise peaceful and law-abiding soul, burst into her local Conservative club on a Saturday night when business was brisk, tore down a large sign saying 'LADIES ARE REQUESTED NOT TO STAND AT THE BAR', threw it to the floor and departed. Ms Willan had voted Tory all her life. She and her husband came from working-class backgrounds but had tried to better themselves by setting up a small business. The Conservative club was the nearest place to their home where they could buy a drink and they found it quite congenial. But Ms Willan became increasingly angry about the rule which forbade her to stand at the bar. 'It seems to me,' she said, 'that these clubs operate on the lines of private gentlemen's clubs where women are tolerated as appendages to men, not as clubs where people of like mind go to enjoy themselves.' She wrote to the Equal Opportunities Commission for advice. They told her that since private clubs were not covered by the Sex Discrimination Act, her only hope was to get on to the management committee and change the policy from within.

Ms Willan then discovered that women were entitled to associate membership only, and had no voting rights, so she could not get on to the management committee. Her fury mounting, she telephoned other Conservative clubs in the area and found that most of them excluded women from full membership, from access to the snooker tables and from standing room by the bar. She took the view that segregating husbands and wives in social and political clubs was divisive, and so contradicted Tory policy on the family. Frustrated by her powerlessness to effect change by democratic means, she resorted to direct action – and hasn't been back to the club since. 'I'll think twice about voting Conservative next time,' she told me. 'I'm in a real dilemma. I've always felt Labour was biased against small businesses, but when I try to remember what the Conservatives have done for women, I can't think of a single thing.'

The Conservative female voter

	Men (%)	Women (%)
Are you satisfied with the government? (11 September 1978)		
Satisfied	40	32
Dissatisfied	48	55
Difference	−8	−23
How do you intend to vote in the next election? (11 September 1978)		
Conservative	46	50
Labour	43	41
Conservative lead	+3	+9
Do women think Callaghan or Thatcher is better at leading the whole country? (June 1978)		
Callaghan		37
Thatcher		21
Equal		18
Callaghan's lead		+16

Polls conducted by MORI for the Daily Express and Daily Mail.

'Suicide is walking down some streets after dark'

In America everything is bigger and better – including violent crime on the streets.
Or is it? This week New Society digs down past the crime statistics of New York and Chicago and takes a look at the muggers and street-fighters themselves. Social psychologist Peter Marsh interviewed members of such teenage gangs as the Sex Boys, the Crazy Homicides and the Latin Kings. What motivates them? How do they fight? Are they really as bad as they're painted? Find out in part I of "Youth Gangs of America" in this week's New Society.
Starting this week, New Society incorporates Society Today, a pull-out supplement for O and A Level students of sociology. This will be published fortnightly during term-time, and the theme this week is 'Voting Behaviour'.

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Christopher Hird: The Economist Misinformation Unit

One of the major planks in the building industry's campaign against possible nationalisation is a weighty report from the Economist Intelligence Unit. The report runs to 280 pages and is unequivocal in its condemnation of the Labour Party's proposal to nationalise the largest building companies, extend local authorities' direct labour departments and establish an employees' register as a way of improving the working conditions in the industry.

The EIU report was published this summer. It was commissioned by the Campaign Against Building Industry Nationalisation (CABIN) which is financed by the employers' organisations in the building industry. CABIN's campaign, which is believed to be costing the builders about £0.5 million, has involved widespread poster advertising (showing the collapsing house of the nationalised building company) but the EIU report has been particularly valuable because it has been presented as an impartial analysis.

The EIU is a subsidiary of The Economist Newspaper Ltd, which also owns the weekly magazine of the same name. But the EIU affairs are kept quite separate and the organisation specialises in producing confidential reports for companies and governments around the world. As CABIN said – 'in case it may be suggested that the building industry's own view may be biased we have commissioned the entirely independent, and internationally respected EIU to make an impartial and expert assessment of the Labour Party's policies.' Whatever else it may be the EIU report is certainly not impartial; its 280 pages 'of fact and analysis' reek of carefully selected statistics and tendentious argument. If it is typical of its output, the EIU's international reputation is in great danger.

The report wastes no time in showing its prejudices. In the first paragraph of its review of the Labour party document *Building Britain's Future*, the EIU asserts:

> *It is therefore necessary to examine whether* the measures proposed would permit competition to be maintained in the long run, since *without it, bureaucratisation would be unavoidable.* (my italics).

Or again, on the next page.

> The possibility of bankruptcy is the other side of the coin from the ease with which the small entrepreneur can enter the business in search of profits and in a free society one would wish to remove neither the disciplinary effect of the one nor the stimulus to endeavour of the other.

Whatever may be the truth of such remarks, they are certainly not the 'objective' comments which we might expect from an 'entirely independent' and 'impartial' analysis. Nor is any evidence produced to support the EIU's contributions to political theory.

If this criticism appears to be nit-picking, it is worth remarking that much of the EIU report involves just such a treatment of the Labour Party proposals. For example, when dealing with the Labour Party charges that cut-price tendering causes a host of problems and abuses, the EIU says:

> Generalisations of this kind are entirely geared to a political purpose. They are *neither true nor untrue except in specific* cases or in the degree of their frequency.

It is advice the EIU would have done well to heed.

The first conclusion of the EIU report which CABIN quote in their summary of the work is as follows:

> The nationalised industries are very important in the national economy, and a poor performance affects the economy as a whole. The country's slow growth and high level of unemployment must, at least in part, be attributed to its nationalised sector. . . . The upheaval that would result from the nationalisation of construction, especially with the existing state of knowledge of how to run a nationalised industry, could have dire consequences in terms of reduced output, higher prices and inefficiency.

These remarks are the results of an 80 page survey of the nationalised industries, over a quarter of the EIU work.

The EIU chose six of the nine nationalised industries. Those omitted were British Gas – the most profitable state owned company and one of the most profitable businesses in the country; British Airways – financially, fairly successful and one of the few state firms which has to operate in an internationally competitive market; and the National Coal Board. However, when discussing the fall in employment in the nationalised industries between 1965 and 1975 the EIU switches back to all nine firms, thus conveniently including the National Coal Board, whose labour force fell from 491,000 to 246,000 in those years. Much of this was not to do with poor management – output per manshift rose by over 25 per cent – but with the low price of oil and competition from other fuels. No mention of this from the EIU.

The EIU is also rather selective in the figures it chooses to support its analysis of the other nationalised industries. As it admits, much of the raw data comes from the National Economic Development Office's study of the nationalised industries. This was published in 1976 and most of its figures only go up to the end of March 1975. For some reason the EIU seems to have found it difficult to update these. So, for example, in its survey of the electricity industry there is a table showing profits since 1960, which reveals that since 1970 the industry has lost nearly £540 million before government grants. There is no mention of the £350 million profit which has been made in the three years since then. When the EIU did its work in the spring of this year, the 1976 and 1977 profit figures had been published and it was possible to make a fair estimate of the out-turn for 1977/78 from government figures published in the *Financial Statement and Budget Report*.

The EIU was, however, better at getting up to date information on the British Steel Corporation, and has managed to include the forecast of £350 million loss for the year which ends next March. There is, though, no mention of the losses being sustained by steel makers elsewhere in the world, though in other industries – such as British Rail and the National Bus Company – international comparisons (generally unfavourable) are thought appropriate.

Ignoring the last two or three years is not a minor mistake. Since the big losses of 1975/6 – often caused, it should be noted, by government price control – the financial position of many nationalised industries has been transformed. There has also been a great deal of debate about the way the industries are controlled by the government – one of the features of the state firms that the EIU thinks bodes ill for the future. In March this year the Government produced a white paper on the subject, to which the EIU devotes one sentence. Whatever the past shows, in this case especially it is not necessarily a reliable guide to the future.

Furthermore, the upheavals caused by nationalisation and reorganisation, about which the EIU is so concerned, are not the prerogative of the state-owned sector. Private sector takeovers have brought the same problems and have also, in some cases, brought unemployment. It is obviously possible that everything is much worse in the public sector than in the private or that there are compensating benefits in the private sector which do not exist in the public. But the EIU does not attempt to examine this, even though to make its case convincing it needs to show that the problems it outlines are specific to the state-owned sector.

In saying that part of the reason for Britain's economic decline must be the performance of the nationalised sector, because it is important in the economy, the EIU falls a victim to the same sort of logical fallacy which it so freely criticizes the Labour document for. And it is interesting that the building industry – which is as big an employer as the nationalised industries and which has sacked about 300,000 workers over the last four years – is not blamed for any part in Britain's economic malaise.

There is one area of the building industry on which the EIU concentrates in some detail: this is the direct labour organisations of the local authorities. The EIU concludes that the non-profit-making DLOs are less efficient than the private sector and local councils are not appropriate bodies to run such organisations.

In support of this view, the EIU quotes the work of Mr M. C. Fleming of Loughborough University who has made various calculations to measure the output of the DLOs compared with private builders. The EIU summarises his work thus:

> He calculated for the third quarter of 1975 that crude output per head of operatives in the case of private contractors was 54.8 per cent above that of local authorities' DLOs, falling to 40.4 per cent if allowance were

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made for the profit element, and to 32.9 per cent if the fact of working proprietors were also taken into account.

They go on to say:

> We have not come across, in our examination of the literature, any serious attempt to overthrow these conclusions with whose assumptions and methodology we find ourselves in broad agreement. On the contrary, we find it a matter for suspicion that the authors of the bill that was presented to Parliament in the 1976/77 session, and which was designed to extend the activities of the DLOs, failed to produce appropriate supporting evidence of a similar kind.

The source of the Fleming work is an article in the building employers' magazine *National Builder* – as the EIU says. What it does not say is that the article was published in March 1978: just a month before the EIU did its work and *after* the parliamentary debate to which it refers. Since the publication of Fleming's article several attempts have indeed been made to overthrow his conclusions but, unsurprisingly, they were not available in April this year.

However, there was at least one source which disagreed with the Fleming conclusions: the EIU itself on page 261 of its own report. Here it calculates that in the last quarter of 1976 in the area of public housing, output per head in the private sector was likely to be between 15 and 20 per cent higher than in DLOs.

However, this is far from the end of the debate. There are several ways in which the adjustments made to published figures are deficient. The initial calculations on output per operative are made by dividing the number of workers into the *gross* value of output. This in itself is a curious measure of productivity: it means that a worker doing a job which uses a lot of expensive materials will 'produce' more than a worker who just uses his skills. A worker building a house will appear more 'productive' than one doing repairs and maintenance, which use very few materials.

This is just what happens in the building industry: a much higher proportion of local authorities' DLO work is on repairs and maintenance work than in the private sector. In October 1976 repairs and maintenance work accounted for about four fifths of DLOs' output and although DLOs account for only a tenth of all construction output they account for almost a third of repairs and maintenance.

So, given the difference in the mix of work between the DLOs and the private sector, gross financial output seems a particularly misleading measure of efficiency. There are other weaknesses in the statistics: the labour force of the private sector excludes self-employed labour-only sub-contractors (the lump) but the output figure includes the value of the materials used by them. As all DLO labour is directly employed, the private sector figures need adjusting to be comparable with the DLOs. This the EIU has done by assuming that there are 200,000 lump workers, though curiously elsewhere in its report it estimates the number at only 70,000 to 90,000.

Such problems in measuring output have led one academic to write:

> There is no regular official index of productivity. The problems involved in trying to devise a satisfactory indicator of productivity change for the construction industry as a whole are even greater than those involved in obtaining an overall indicator of price movements. Indeed the problems are so severe as to seem insurmountable . . . Such calculations are open to objection on grounds of principle and also because of grave deficiencies in the data employed.

The author of this was none other than M. C. Fleming – whose work has proved such valuable ammunition for the builders in their campaign against direct labour, and with whose methodology and assumptions the EIU broadly agrees.

Supporters of DLOs often claim that the DLOs are better employers – in their concentration on training and in conditions of employment for instance – and that they produce better work. Clearly if these benefits could be quantified, further adjustments would be needed to the crude measures of productivity. Although the EIU does not embark on any systematic analysis of such factors, it has managed to discover that the private sector has a much better record in training apprentices: in the private sector there is one apprentice to every seven craftsmen, compared with a ratio of 1: 10 in local authorities. There are two reasons why this crude comparison may be misleading: First, the figures for the private sector exclude the lump, where about 80 per cent of workers are skilled. Second, as a recent publication (*Building with Direct Labour*, Conference of Socialist Economics) has shown, many DLOs are too small to support any apprentices and comparison of large DLOs with large private contractors shows the DLOs have a much better record on training.

One aspect of the EIU report which has received some publicity is its calculation of the cost of the proposals to nationalise the building industry. As the CABIN summary says:

> The total cost of the various expenditures proposed in *Building Britain's Future* is estimated to be in the range of £1,870 million to £2,745 million for initial costs and nationalisation, and £395 million to £522 million for annual costs.

The lower end of the range assumes the nationalisation of five building firms; the higher end assumes the nationalisation of ten companies and most of the building materials industry. Both include the estimated costs of the running of a central agency to co-ordinate the letting of public sector contracts and the cost of a system of fall-back pay. Some of these calculations seem very rough and ready.

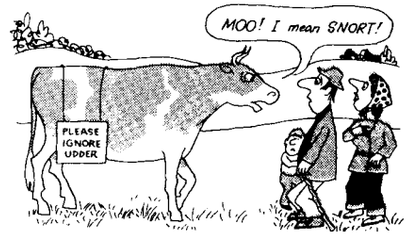
The EIU has assumed that the nationalised companies would be paid for by issuing government stock, on which interest would have to be paid. In the case of the largest ten companies, the capital cost would be of the order of £723 million (the remaining £2 billion is accounted for by including the building materials companies).

Interest payments on the £723 million would amount to about £90 million, compared with profits of about £154 million, which do, incidentally, include a large overseas content, which may or may not face nationalisation. The EIU manages to show a net running loss of the order of £84 million by including an item for 'improvements in working conditions'. This is one of the benefits claimed for nationalisation by the Labour Party document, which incautiously says 'social costs are at least equal to the profit element of a private contractor's costs.' Jumping on this, the EIU has reckoned that profits are about 5 per cent of turnover, so social costs will amount to £146 million.

There is little evidence to support the Labour Party view that nationalisation *per se* improves the workers' lot and the EIU's device of turning the Labour document's argument against itself may be fine for a political platform but looks a bit poor in a serious independent analysis. And in calculating the cost of taking over the materials companies – £250 million of the £520 million a year upper range – the EIU seems to have forgotten to take account of the profits that these companies make altogether.

This slap-happy approach to arithmetic only serves to highlight the complete lack of any analysis of the building industry in the EIU report. They agree that the building industry has special features – discontinuity of employment, a high accident rate, a high level of bankruptcies and so on – but none of these things exist in a vacuum: all are affected by the organisation of the industry and the world in which it operates. Building is not necessarily, as the EIU asserts, 'by its nature a dangerous trade'. It may be a dangerous trade when it has to operate under certain conditions. For all its faults, the Labour Party document grasps that important fact.

This England 1974/78



☐ A cow disguised as a bull is being used to deter people from a farmland footpath at Langleybury, near Watford, Herts. — *Daily Telegraph.*

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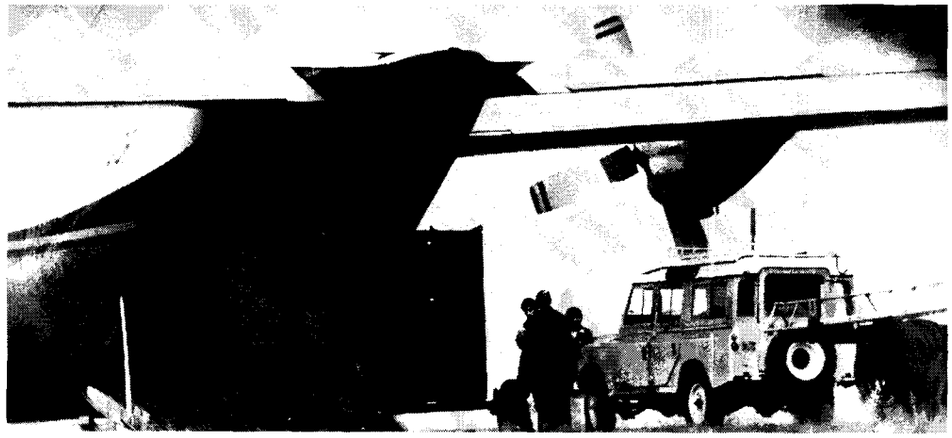
Bernard Nossiter:

How the CIA keeps Idi Amin in whisky



One of Ugandan Airways' fleet, the Lockheed Hercules, loads up at Stansted Airport. *Photo Michael Ward*

A mysterious Israeli tycoon and the spy services of Israel and the United States appear to be collaborating in a strange enterprise to keep President Idi Amin's Uganda Airlines flying. The peculiar affair is said to have been designed chiefly to keep an eye on Libya, where Amin's transports refuel on their way to Europe.

The operation appears to yield little of intelligence value. But it does help swell the massive profits of Shaul Eisenberg, the elusive entrepreneur at its centre. It enables MOSSAD, the Israeli intelligence service, to 'launder' or hide the source and distribution of its ample funds. It provides jobs for otherwise idle hands in the Central Intelligence Agency, from where the operation is said to be run.

Uganda Airlines consists of three US planes: a Lockheed Hercules C-130 and two Boeing 707s converted to take cargo. The latter at least could not have reached Amin without State Department approval since the Department has recently been required to certify that an export shall not be used to suppress human rights.

The 707s got to Amin through several of Eisenberg's 80 or so companies. The chief Eisenberg firm in these deals was Aircraft Trading and Services Inc. (ATASCO). It was created by a giant subsidiary of the Israeli Defence Ministry, Eisenberg and the US Export-Import Bank.

Amin, whose crews are supplied by still another US firm, must know what is going on. No doubt he is delighted with a cut-rate service that carries out Ugandan coffee, officials and their mistresses, and brings back whisky, machine tools, livestock, Mercedes-Benz limousines and the other vital needs of a developing African state.

In Benghazi, where the 707s touch down several times a week, the Libyans must also know who is looking at them and when. Colonel Qadhafi's services probably provide appropriate 'disinformation' for their Ugandan visitors.

Whether or not the CIA and MOSSAD are aware that their operation has been blown is a source of dispute among the international pilots who fly non-scheduled routes. The intelligence community in London believes all parties on all sides are 'witting'. But since all parties on all sides gain something from the operation, it continues its untroubled course.

At the heart of the network is Eisenberg's ATASCO. Its main office is in Asia House, Eisenberg's luxury building in Tel Aviv; there are branches in the 'Eisenberg Buildings' in New York and London.

ATASCO was put together in 1971 by executives of Israeli Aircraft Industries, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Israel Defence Ministry and the nation's biggest employer, making planes and missiles. Eisenberg got into ATASCO as an equal partner with IAI for $500,000 in cash. The remaining capital, several million dollars, came from the US Export-Import Bank. After the 1973 war, IAI – staggered by scandals – sold its share to Eisenberg. High-ranking IAI executives followed him into ATASCO and other parts of his global network. The Ex-Im Bank is supposed to make loans to promote US exports and they found the right man in Eisenberg.

Pan American Airways gave ATASCO first refusal to buy all its used 707s. Intelligence sources in London say that Pan Am was instructed to do so by the CIA, though a Pan Am spokesman denies this. In addition to some purchases from TWA ATASCO bought 12 'C' advanced series 707/321s and six 'C' series early models. At its Israeli hangars, jammed with 707s bearing obscure markings, ATASCO remodelled the interiors to suit its customers and painted them with the colours of Iran Air, Tarom of Rumania, Uganda Airlines (Arab customers get their used 707s elsewhere). With informal approval from the US State Department, it then sold one 707, 'Clipper Jupiter', to Zimex-Aviation of Zurich which passed it on to Amin. Zimex is not much of a company – Hans Ziegler, his secretary and a few others – but it has lots of Swiss francs and an excellent credit rating among the gnomes. It should have. Ziegler is a 15 year veteran of MOSSAD and Zimex is an agency 'laundry'. It seems to exist simply to serve as a conduit, disguising MOSSAD funds for deals in which MOSSAD is interested.

By the time CIA or Idi Amin or somebody decided Uganda Airlines should double its 707 fleet, political speeches about human rights made another such sale awkward. So ATASCO sold Pan Am's 'Clipper Undaunted' in March 1977 to Ronair Inc. which has been leasing the plane to Uganda Airlines.

Ronair – three people and President Fred Solomon – by remarkable coincidence share an office at 4, East 39 St. (the Eisenberg Building), with Eisenberg's ATASCO.

Since Amin, when he seized power, butchered most of Uganda's Israeli-trained pilots, his airline was short of crews. But happily yet another US concern, Aviation Technical Assistance and Service Co. (AVTEC) of Burlinghame, Cal., is in the very business of supplying them. And its President, John McEvoy, says: 'Uganda Airlines is one of our best customers, they pay well'. At first, McEvoy could not recall who had brought him the Uganda contract. Then he remembered that it was a Swiss firm. Questioned further, he acknowledged that 'We're a subcontractor of Zimex'. He did not know whether his prime contractor was a link in MOSSAD's network. He was certain that his firm had no ties with Eisenberg's ATASCO. However, at least one pilot hired by AVTEC to fly for Uganda Airlines recalls that his training on the 707 was held up for lack of a $25,000 payment. This pilot simply called ATASCO in Tel Aviv to pay AVTEC's debt and the money arrived promptly.

McEvoy was careful not to say that AVTEC supplied Amin with navigators. Indeed, pilots assert none are needed on the Uganda Airlines planes. However, several have been spotted and some speak with an American accent. The 'navigators' apparently do the looking when Uganda Airline planes touch down in Benghazi.

The planes fly no fixed schedule. But they make the Entebbe-Benghazi-Stansted run to Britain about twice a week.

The Uganda Airlines 'navigators' can see a military airfield at Benghazi. Their reports, it is known, are shared among Israeli, US and British intelligence, but whether they see anything worthwhile is doubtful.

Recently, a Uganda Airlines pilot was engaged in radio conversation with a colleague flying over the Mediterranean. The Ugandan plane said it had left Malta and was on its way to Djibouti with a full cargo. Since Malta has become an arms depot for Qadhafi and Libya, it is not impossible that Uganda's converted Pan Am plane was

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bringing in weapons to the troubled Horn of Africa. Whether MOSSAD or the CIA saw any profit in this is a mind-boggling exercise in shifting alliances.

The most fascinating character in the whole affair is Eisenberg, the Yiddish-speaking tycoon who never speaks with the press. Born in Munich in 1922, he somehow got to Japan and there married the daughter of an Austrian painter and his Japanese wife. Eisenberg is thought to have sat out the war years in Japan.

After the war, like several other fabled international operators, he started his fortune by dealing in surplus weapons. His family multiplied. So did his corporate entities. Today, he boasts comfortable homes in Tokyo, London, Zurich and Savyon, a wealthy suburb of Tel Aviv. Four of his married daughters live in Israel. A fifth, Mrs E. Diamond, lives in a villa in Hampstead, North London, and Eisenberg himself maintains an apartment in a comfortable building nearby. Two floors below live his son Erwin and Erwin's wife, Angie. His family profess never to know where he is or when he will be back.

Eisenberg's business empire includes at least 70 concerns in one holding company alone, United Development Inc. ATASCO is one of United's subsidiaries. Outside United's grasp is the Eisenberg Export Co., Bargad Trading Co., Asia House and others.

Eisenberg is clearly a persuasive man. He is the sole beneficiary of what in Israel is called the Eisenberg Law. It exempts from tax certain companies who do business abroad. So far, it fits only Eisenberg. A contribution of ten million pounds to the Eisenberg Hospital in Jaffa may have sweetened the way for Eisenberg's Law.

It is not clear what nationality he really is. One report says he carries an Austrian passport. But Eisenberg is obviously eager to keep close to Israel's power elite. He staffs his companies with high ranking former officers, diplomats and the like.

At the Israeli Aircraft Industries hangar where ATASCO work is done, Eisenberg is currently outfitting one of the 707s for his own use. It will serve as a flying office to keep him in touch with his business, which is more or less coterminous with the planet.

A recent call to ATASCO's London office turned up the report that Eisenberg was in Hanoi, 'negotiating a big deal'.

He does not always take all branches of the Israeli Government into his confidence. When the late Finance Minister, Pinhas Sapir, first learned of Eisenberg's partnership with IAI in ATASCO, Sapir remarked: 'We were shown a bride who is slightly pregnant.' But Eisenberg has a charm that overcomes resentment. It was Sapir who put through the 'Eisenberg Law'.

There are frequent but unsubstantiated reports that Eisenberg operates mostly from Central America these days. Among other things, he is the Panamanian Honorary General Consul in Tel Aviv.

Unlike Eisenberg, a spokesman for the CIA was reached. He had no comment on the affair. MOSSAD has no spokesman and Israel, like Britain, pretends its intelligence service does not exist. As for Ziegler, the putative MOSSAD man in Zurich, his secretary said he was unreachable, 'on a boat'.

Sane- but sentenced to an asylum.

Bukovsky's terrifying ordeal.

Vladimir Bukovsky, born 1942, had spent more than half his adult life as a victim of the harsh Soviet penal system, before his release to the West two years ago.

His terrifying autobiography amounts to a shocking indictment of Russian injustice. Read it this week only in the Sunday Telegraph.

Sunday Telegraph

With the Telegraph Sunday Magazine

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Patrick Wintour: Tanzania: Ujamaa and U-turns

Many outsiders have looked upon Tanzania as the experimental laboratory for post-colonial socialism in Africa. But on a recent visit to the country I found many who felt the experiment has degenerated into bureaucratic nationalism, political authoritarianism and economic compromise. Only the popularity of Julius Nyerere – whose vision has shaped the 11 year reconstruction of Tanzania – holds the shaky edifice together.

After six years of post-colonial rule, the 1967 Arusha Declaration of TANU, the sole political party, set Tanzania on its famous path of self-reliance and self-help, based on 'paying heed to the peasantry'. This ambitious programme was to be achieved by an inexperienced civil service, three quarters staffed by foreigners in 1961 but, by 1974 almost entirely Tanzanian. Much has been done. The banks and the insurance houses have been nationalised; no major industry is now controlled by private or foreign interests – in 1965 three quarters of investment came from the private sector; 3,000 different prices are set by the state; monopoly state control of agricultural marketing has been introduced; a heavily progressive tax structure has left a maximum 9 to 1 post tax differential amongst wage earners; the educational system has been entirely reshaped to emphasise primary education relevant to a peasant society; and the target date for universal primary education has been brought forward ten years to 1979.

But the economic results have been disappointing. The war against poverty is not being won. Growth rates have declined by about 2 per cent since the Arusha Declaration, leaving Tanzania among the world's poorest 25 countries. Agricultural growth of 2.7 per cent has just kept pace with population growth and manufacturing productivity has declined at a rate of 3 per cent a year. The Minister of Agriculture has abandoned his goal of self-sufficiency in food by 1980 and the aspiration self reliance contrasts starkly with the reality of a national budget two thirds financed by foreign aid. The hiatus came in 1974. Although Tanzania had, admirably, raised gross domestic investment as a proportion of GDP to 20 per cent, the majority of this had been poured into services, particularly public administration. The Government had massively increased their own spending between 1971 and 1974 by 150 per cent. Transport and communications had gobbled up 43 per cent of all capital formation. Despite the party slogan that 'Agriculture is Politics', the agricultural share of total public investment had been halved to 5 per cent. Government-fixed producer prices for cash crops were declining in real terms, so the peasants simply did not find it worth their while to produce the coffee, tobacco and tea which made up the bulk of the country's exports. As a result, the balance of payments surpluses of the Sixties disappeared. Then 1974 brought a drought, which increased food imports dramatically, a massive hike in the price of oil and widespread disruption caused by the government's 'villagisation' programme. At one point the country was down to its last month of foreign exchange. To protect the urban population from the drought the government raised wages by 40 per cent in May 1974.

Nyerere wanted Tanzanians to regain their former attitude of mind through co-operative *ujamaa* villages. They were to grow with 'peasant co-operation and rational understanding', creating a socialist countryside which would control the state and urban areas. But by 1973 only 15 per cent of the population lived in the *ujamma* villages, which were concentrated in the poorest regions and communal plots accounted for a miserable 2 per cent of tolat village output. So the government decided on 'planned development villages'.

In 1973 the *Daily News* announced 'To Live in a Village is an Order.' Nyerere explained: 'Without villages, the majority of people are living a life of death.' The whole countryside was to be moved into settlements of at least 250 families. Within three years and with minimum consultation 11 million people were 'villagised', though many of the richest, were spared. The government's interest was in making best use of the economies of scale and providing schools, hospitals and electricity most easily. As a result many of the villages were too large and just dumped near the roads; basic tests of soil fertility, erodibility and crop suitability were not carried out. Already some of the government's own reports suggest that the increased population and cattle pressure necessary to a static, intensive form of agriculture will turn the semi-arid regions into deserts. It is an immense gamble.

In an attempt to get the economy growing, the government has stopped encouraging communal activity in the villages and a rural class structure is beginning to emerge. Nyerere has redrawn the country's investment programme in favour of directly productive goods, has massively raised producer prices for cash crops and introduced individual incentives in factories. Import controls have been relaxed and, symbolically, one lgovernment owned concern has been allowed to go bust because of its inefficiency.

Corrupt managers have been sacked; the number of civil servants cut by 10,000 and technocrats promoted in the cabinet. Private shops are no longer frowned upon and petrol stations and butchers have been denationalised. Another of Nyerere's cherished ideals – the encouragement of participatory socialism – has suffered a further setback with parliamentary attacks on political meetings which disrupt production.

In 1971 *Mwongozo*, or the TANU guidelines, encouraged a mini-cultural revolution of public criticism of the industrial and political leadership. It led to a wave of strikes against managerialism and subsequent repression by the authorities. Worker participation is now a dead letter and the single trade union spurned by most workers. Even the 1972 government attempt at decentralisation as a way of democratizing the development process has only been a partial success. In 1977 over 330 university students (subsequently reduced to 30) were expelled for daring to demonstrate against a covert 100 per cent rise in MPs salaries. The campus is now quiet but the student union has been replaced by the party.

Recent economic changes have met with the approval of both the World Bank and the IMF. The World Bank are Tanzania's third most important lender and have recently produced a secret, critical report on her economy. The IMF have visited the country twice in the last year. Both organisations have drawn attention to Tanzania balance of payments problems: no export strategy and a heavy reliance on foreign loans. Next year Tanzania will receive $400 million. The softness of these loans (which have tripled in value in the last decade) is quite extraordinary: debt service claims only 6 per cent of export earnings.

The World Bank has attacked the productivity record of Tanzania and argued for an opening up of the economy to international markets. Many of Tanzania's recent changes have been based on the World Bank's analysis and statistics. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) have just finished their own report using the World Bank's work as a point of departure. As yet unpublished, it says that the growth in Tanzanian GNP since independence compares favourably with capitalist Kenya, notes a flourishing small scale industry and argues that many of the World Bank's statistical series are wrong, leading it to an unnecessarily pessimistic analysis of productivity, urban unemployment and investment effectiveness.

The World Bank, however, seem to be winning the argument. Last year the aid consortium which helps Tanzania delayed the publication of the country's third five-year development plan because they thought it unrealistically ambitious. The plan aimed to build a basic industry infrastructure which will make the economy more flexible to international market changes and less of a Third World stereotype exporting unprocessed agricultural goods. It is a high risk strategy on two counts. It creates little growth and is, for over a decade, heavily import intensive. The only way to pay, apart from more dependence on western aid, will be by increasing crop exports by pushing up farmers prices. But such a policy is likely to produce a peasant kulak class and, second, increase inequality between the regions growing cash crops and those not. But for the moment Nyerere the socialist seems to be able to stomach this as he evidently believes that if you want efficiency you pay people to work. As he once frankly admitted: 'Socialism is not in sight . . . it is not even thirty years away . . . to the mass of people power is something wielded by someone else.'

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London Diary

☐ The Public Accounts Committee is usually described as the 'public's watchdog' over their money. Reassuringly, it is chaired by Edward Du Cann, MP, who was chairman of the merchant bank Keyser Ullman when it had to be bailed out by other banks including the Bank of England (and public money) when it started losing up to £60m a year in the early 1970s. Last week, the Committee criticised firms which get government grants for maintaining or creating jobs in 'special assistance areas' – but which failed to maintain or create the jobs promised. In England, in 1976-7, the Committee disclosed, a third of the jobs promised did not materialise. About £43m. was paid out in grants, so it's safe to assume that at least £14m. of this was swiped. Can we get this money back? 'You will just have to wait for a Treasury minute on this' said a Department of Industry spokeswoman. And who are these companies anyway? Surely we can know that? Hasn't the Labour Government decreed that the names of firms who get government grants must be published?

No we can't know. The survey, on which the Public Accounts Committee was based, was carried out by the Comptroller and Auditor General's department in what they call 'conditions of total confidentiality'. The names of the firms are secret. Never mind. We have a free Press, which specialises in rooting out scroungers off the state. Indeed, the *News of the World* is running a campaign against scroungers. Surely they would name the guilty company directors who are swindling in special assistance grants alone twice as much out of the taxpayer than are all the social security frauds put together?

You won't believe this, but the *News of the World* hasn't mentioned the matter. Which goes to prove what is becoming known in Fleet Street as the Shrimsley principle (after Bernard Shrimsley, editor of the *News of the World*, and his brother Anthony Shrimsley, former flatterer of Harold Wilson, who now writes Tory propaganda in the *Sun*). The principle is that scroungers off the taxpayer must be exposed and humiliated without fear or favour, provided only that they make less in a week than the average Fleet Street executive spends on lunch in a day.

☐ I know I shouldn't advertise here, but can anyone get me (for a single figure sum) a first edition of Olive Schreiner's *Trooper Peter Halket in Mashonaland?* I want the first edition not out of book lust (well, not *only* out of book lust) but for its frontispiece; a haunting photograph of a public hanging in Mashonaland during the wars which gave rise to Rhodesia. A few louts from Rhodes' army are standing under the hanging corpses. They look half-bored, half-triumphant.

It is one of those photographs which sums up a part of history better than any number of words; better even than Olive Schreiner's lovely little story, or than J. E. S. Green's classic exposé, *Rhodes Goes North*. Rhodesia was born by means of the subjection and robbery of a proud and defenceless people. It's government has stuck fast to those traditions ever since. The racialist lynchings, together with the cynicism and greed of their executioners, are still going on today. *That* is, and always will be, the 'civilisation' represented by Ian Smith.

The sight of this tyrant strutting about the corridors of power in Washington, with his former prisoner, Uncle Tom Sithole, trotting along behind him has been the chief horror of the week. I see that Lord George Brown and a claque of Tory extremists want to bring Smith here. I wonder if Brown remembers a single word of his passionate denunciations of Smith when he (Brown) was Foreign Secretary and when even Edward Heath said of Smith: 'We should have no dealings with him'.

No wonder Brown is threatening to vote Tory. But don't worry. Peers and lunatics can't vote, which I always thought was very hard on the lunatics.

☐ I doubt whether there's a single Labour MP who's entirely happy about the election of Dennis Skinner to the Labour Party Executive. It's not his views which worry his colleagues. It's the way he lives up to them. Alone in Parliament, he recognises the corrupting influence on elected MPs of the unelected hustlers, PR-men and company lobbyists who swarm about Parliament. Dennis Skinner will have nothing to do with any of them. He will not accept even a drink if he can't buy the next round. He refuses all invitations to 'all-party' trips abroad which he regards either as perks or as consensus politics. 'We never get anywhere by consensus' he says. 'Only by conflict'.

For a long time now Tory newspapers have passed off Dennis Skinner as a bit of a joke. But now he's been elected to the executive, he gets more serious treatment. On Sunday he got the accolade: a full frontal assault from Hugo Young, the formerly liberal *Sunday Times* leader-writer, who is making a bid for grazing rights in the Bernard Levin Pasture for Retired Radicals. The sight and sound of a socialist who means what he says and says what he means was too much for poor old Hugo, who went right over the top, even managed to describe Dennis Skinner's style as 'sub-fascist'.

At the end of his article, Young found a few paragraphs to speak up for his candidate for next Labour leader: Peter Shore. Why? Because Shore, writes Hugo, 'is a realist whom the Left are willing to applaud'. That is, he fools people with hypocritical rhetoric. I should have thought that the Labour Party had had quite enough of leaders like that, but maybe that's why sub-Tories like Hugo Young are still promoting them.

☐ I must warn people who watch television late at night this week to beware of a thing called Heseltine which can spring out at you from the screen without warning, gesticulating wildly and bawling abuse against council house tenants or miners or decent people anywhere. Some people think that the Heseltine doesn't really exist, but is a sort of test tube Tory which is switched on to give used car salesmen and advertising executives at Tory Party conferences a bit of a thrill. Not so, however. I have seen the Heseltine in the flesh.

It happened 26 years ago at a refinement centre, mainly for the sons of Lancashire manufacturers, called Shrewsbury School. One evening all the boys were herded into a debate. The proposition was 'That This House disapproves of the Public School System'. Speaking for the motion was an 'old boy' called Michael Heseltine (and another called Julian Critchley). Heseltine raved against the snobbery and sports culture of public schools. He denounced corporal punishment. There were 'oohs' and 'ahs' throughout the hall when he mentioned homosexuality. He was opposed by Anthony Chevenix Trench, who later became headmaster of Eton (where his enthusiastic beating habits did not go down too well) and Michael Hoban, who later became headmaster of Harrow.

Trench was oily, and Hoban boring. So we voted by a huge majority for the motion. The following day we were solemnly told that Heseltine had 'betrayed his school'. He had sold the result of his debating triumph to William Hickey of the *Daily Express*! The worst punishment known to man was inevitable. *He was struck off the Old Salopian register!* He is back on the register now, of course (who could have thought he would turn out a Tory Minister?) and Tories who read this need not worry. He has amassed a huge fortune for himself and can on all future occasions be relied on to stand firm by his property and his class.

☐ I wrote last week about a Shelley conference where Desmond King-Hele had spoken about Erasmus Darwin's influence on Shelley. After an urgent meeting at the *New Statesman*'s printers, Christopher Hitchens decided that this was wrong. What appeared in print was that Desmond King-Hele had spoken about *Erasmus's and Darwin's* influence on Shelley. I have a great respect for Christopher Hitchens, so I have been making inquiries. As far as I can see, Erasmus' influence on Shelley was negligible. Charles Darwin (the person normally thought of as 'Darwin') was restricted in his influence on Shelley by being 12 when Shelley died. I therefore prefer my version.

Paul Foot

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ The company's book, *Sellocraft*, is a little mine of items that children can make for themselves and for each other using normal household objects (like champagne corks). – *The Times* (J. Claessens)

☐ Socialists used to say ironically that the poor are free to dine at the Ritz, meaning that they weren't: but the poor are in fact free to dine at the Ritz, even if they cannot afford to exercise their freedom – provided that the Ritz itself is allowed to exist. – *Daily Telegraph* (Peter Haywood)

☐ Darlington Works and Health Committee heard on Monday that residents in Starmer Crescent wanted their neighbour's pet pythons evicted to a zoo. The committee decided that the protesters should meet the snakes, and see how well and safely looked after they were – *Darlington and Stockton Times* (E. J. Bell)

☐ Outside Ford's factory gates in Dagenham yesterday one of the men on picket duty said: 'I'll tell you what my wife thinks – she thinks exactly as I tell her to.' – *Daily Telegraph* (Joyce Parvin)

☐ 'The trouble', said Mr Ward, 'is that there are too many professionals in this game now. I regard beer mat flipping as a spare time sport. Now, everywhere you go in the town, there are people flipping beer mats when they should be at work. I begin to wonder what the country is coming too.' – *Lochaber Free Press* (Jane Polar)

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Curds and Whey

For one who enjoys any form of travel that doesn't include the supreme boredom-cum-fright of aeroplanes, it has always been agreeable to ponder on the individual characteristics of large railway-stations in our happy land. Waterloo was once to me a station of sorrow (we returned from it to my prep school, trying not to blub and wearing, of all ludicrous forms of headgear for boys of nine, bowler hats) but during the war years it provided the best relayed music of the lot, with hurry-scurry snippets from dawn on to ginger up those involved, as who wasn't, in the war effort, and in the afternoon the soothing melodies of Strauss and Eric Coates to strike a more restful and relaxed note, with occasional bursts of the Warsaw Concerto to remind one of more serious matters. And I was always delighted by Waterloo's little square oasis of wooden benches surrounding a notice saying: 'Please do not feed the pigeons' and filled with persons busily feeding the pigeons.

Liverpool Street, despite its relative remoteness, had for me a joyous ambiance for it was from there that one set sail for childhood Christmasses in Essex and, later on, for yet another merriment-packed eight weeks at Cambridge University. There was in term-time a late evening train departing from Liverpool Street and much used by those undergraduates who, thirsting for a wider world, had hurried to the capital for certain exploratory physical activities not at that time freely available in the fens. This train was known, and of course I can hardly be expected to understand why, as The Fornicator. One that left even later and at midnight was called The Super-Fornicator. Make of this what you will.

No right-thinking person can question the statement that Paddington is the Lester Piggott, the very top, the cream of the station world and to it were allotted, naturally, those very early high-speed trains. At first they merely whizzed one, and so silently, to Bristol and back but now in the south west we are promised them quite soon and here please allow me to say a warmly appreciative word on behalf of St David's Station, Exeter. Behind an unostentatious facade in a pleasing beige shade, calm efficiency and comforts galore await the traveller. It is true that the platform ticket dispenser sometimes sticks and 'Ron' is summoned from behind his busy guichet to put it right, but who minds that when we have, for one thing, porters (do you remember these helpful fellows? They used to hump luggage about and, eyes elsewhere, politely accept tips, a shining example to their appalling frog counterparts who start to scream and prance whatever sum they are given). Once one is safely onto the platform, the bookstall's wide range of reading matter (yes, yes, our favourite weekly is present and rapidly snapped up, I need hardly say) astonishes everybody. Only the very best of British buns grace our buffets (down here the word 'buffet' is uttered in no fancy foreign fashion and is spoken to rhyme with the tuffet on which Miss Muffet sat, that early pioneer in the field of yoghurt, a substance that few ever dreamt of bothering about before but without which all modern children would now drop dead from malnutrition.)

And in addition to these treats, we possess the Alvar Liddell, nay, the Stuart Hibberd of the station announcers' world, a disembodied voice of astonishing audibility and resonance that rings confidently out over Platforms 1 to 6 and which plainly takes great pleasure in its exacting work. I would say, at an informed guess, that the owner of these outstanding vocal cords had wisely trained them by a system popular many moons ago but which now seems to exist no more. I refer, of course, to the Claribel Voice Production Technique ('Every word a jewel') which claimed stage stars innumerable among its pupils and defiantly announced that its founder was 'Dame Ida Claribel' (a Pimpernel figure unknown to *Who's Who*), a name obviously designed to promote trust and hope in her students, with its echoes of both 'clarity 'and 'bell-like tones'. Be that as it may, our fine announcer skilfully varies his tone of voice to suit the train. With the 8.04 a.m. businessmen's express to Paddington, there is, in his crisp 'Close all doors and stand clear', a hint of the urgent City, the bustle of Threadneedle Street, and the Bank of England supporting, as so often, the Pound. With, on the other hand, the 3.26 p.m to Dawlish (arrival 3.41), there is a heady suggestion of the languorous South Coast and its sun-drenched beaches where Time, though not the train (Teignmouth, 3.47), seems to stand still.

It was these exemplary tones which, a few evenings ago, wafted me onto the 6.48 p.m. 'Sundays only' train for London, the voice suitably throatier and more parsonic and carrying with it the faintest shadow of a reproach that one had had to skip evensong. But something worse than a reproach awaited me as I climbed into the leading coach. There in front of me and by way of a cheery 'welcome aboard' greeting was a printed notice stuck to the door of the lavatory. PRIVATE, it said, and then added underneath to make its grim message absolutely clear to all, NOT FOR PUBLIC USE. Did you ever! What thin end of the wedge is this? If sections of our trains, other than seats, are to be reserved, for whom, may one ask, are they being reserved? The guard? The engine-driver (he could, at a pinch, nip along the platform at Taunton for a quick one)? We were next door to the restaurant car. Was it for the chef, perhaps, a spent force after constructing ninety-eight sausage rolls?

This denial of my proper W.C. facilities was by no means my only irritation and insult of the week. I recently hazarded a guess that, with its fatuous and costly newspaper advertisements and their wildly unfunny jokey telegrams, the Post Office had sunk to its nadir. But I had under-rated its submersible powers. Professor Piccard and his bathyscape just isn't in it. You have doubtless been as repelled as I to find, in a number of dailies, an advertisement costing heaven knows what and featuring 'The Royal Mail Marketing Team', ten strong and introduced to us in the chummiest manner as 'Stan' and 'Andy' and so on, with semi-caricatured drawings of them all, smiling their hearts out (the only ones that are), by an artist called Sallon. Did he, for pictorial purposes, travel to each of them? Did they come individually to him? What did it all cost? What was Sallon's fee? And what can be the purpose of pushing these persons visually forwards? Why do I need to know that the London representative, Mike Dixon, is apparently as bald as a coot? What means it to me that Brian Stark (Eastern) sports gig-lamps? How shall I benefit from the knowledge that our local chap, 'Dick' Wheelhouse, has an abundant brunette chevelure and a moustache? I am urged, if wishful to take part in mail orders, to fill in a coupon and send it to 'Jackie' Willbourne at St Martin's-le-Grand, E.C.1., which is the place whence that tetchy gentleman writes me (9p stamp) letters of reproof when I criticise the Post Office. Well, I shall continue to criticise every aspect of this scandalous monopoly – its squandering of money, its unreliability, and now, its cheek.

Roger Woddis

Standards

Ian Smith has assured whites in Rhodesia fearful of an end to racial discrimination that 'standards will be maintained'.

The flag that now flies upside-down
Is purest white and Lord George-Brown;
Whatever winds of change may blow,
We'll still preserve the status quo.
Then let us raise our standards high,
There's less in this than meets the eye:
If Owen doesn't interfere,
We'll keep the same old standards here.

With softened faces swear we all
To be converted like St. Paul,
Pretending that we've learnt it pays
To see the terror of our ways.
Then let us raise our standards high
For those who can afford to buy:
While labour's cheap and land is dear,
We'll keep the same old standards here.

The doors of hospitals and schools
Swing open wide, but we're not fools;
Deserving blacks will get the crumbs,
With whites still free to live in slums.
Then let us raise our standards high,
Within the shade of UDI:
However new they may appear,
We'll keep the same old standards here.

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Letters to the Editor

Israel's Arab Guests

Sir, Ian Black (NS 29 September) puts Israel in an invidious position: if she employs Arabs from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, she is branded an exploiter; if she denies these Arabs employment in Israel, she is bound to be accused of discriminatory practice. Either way, it seems, Israel cannot win.

The relationship between these Arab workers and the Israeli economy, has been one of reciprocity and mutual benefit. The Arabs who daily cross the 'green line' to do 'dirty jobs' (as Mr Black puts it) in Israel have experienced prosperity on a scale not known before 1967. Mr Black acknowledges grudgingly that the Histadrut and the Israeli authorities took action over the deplorable phenomenon of child labour to which he has given prominence in his article.

Mr Black might also have mentioned that the *rai's* is a traditional Arab institution without whom few Arabs could get employment amongst their own people, not only in Israel. Thus, the first one to 'exploit' the Arab labourer and cheat him of his wages is his own *rai's*, and there is very little Israel – and for that matter anybody else – could do to prevent this.

Mr Black attempts to force an analogy between Israel and South Africa whose treatment of black labour carries the odium of racial discrimination. West Germany, Scandinavia and other industrial West Europe countries have taken in over the last decade hundreds of thousands of 'guest workers' from Turkey, Greece, Cyprus, and Spain because West European workers have become too fastidious to do the more menial jobs in their countries. May I suggest that Israel's relationship with the Arab labourers of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip resembles more closely the European example than the South African one which Mr Black put forth?

ADAM KAYE

34 Elm Tree Road
London NW8

Moral fibre

Sir, Anna Coote's conclusion on the Press Council's rejection of Sappho's complaints against the *Evening News* being 'bizarre' was most perceptive, although the use of bizarre was charitable in the extreme. To our minds The Press Council has rubber-stamped unethical behaviour by press and journalists. Where does this leave those papers and reporters who *do* use ethical methods?

That Hartley Shawcross, the retiring chairman, can 'rant on about threats to the moral fibre of the UK' while giving the green light to immoral practices by the press, leaves us only to conclude that dotage debilitates judgment.

JACKIE FORSTER
NIKKI HENRIQUES

20 Dorset Square
London NW1

From the trenches

Sir, Has public school bashing been currently flogged (sic) to death? May I, as a public school teacher, defend what your correspondent Mark Herbet (NS 29 September) calls a 'socially divisive and immoral system'? To offer a view from the trenches (albeit public school ones), education is not primarily a political activity; it is a human one, to do with growth, change, loss and gain; it assumes imperfection as a starting-point, is both exciting and difficult and is just as likely (or unlikely) to occur in a public school as in a comprehensive school.

I promise to question my love for tradition and the past and hope Mark Herbert will question his love for abstract terms such as 'society', 'social significance', and 'sociological implications.' And there is, in my view, nourishment for both of us in these lines of Coleridge:

I may not hope from outward forms to win
The passion and the life, whose fountains
are within.

A. J. HURST

44 Parliament Hill
London NW3

The uses of literacy

Sir, The tiresome pedant who compiles your 'This English' column finds fault with the phrase 'H.M. Government Health Departments' Warning' (NS 6 October). How else would he describe, concisely but accurately, a warning issued jointly by the Department of Health and Social Security and the Scottish Home and Health Department?

DERMOD QUIRKE

18 Trouville Road
London SW4

Ditto

Sir, John Shirley writes (NS 29 September): 'She contacted a freelance journalist who suggested she spoke to the *Guardian*.' Actually he suggested she *speak* to the *Guardian*. After all, we are entitled to assume, from the context, that the freelance journalist had no evidence that the lady spoke to the *Guardian* before seeing him.

To put it another way; the subjunctive case still lives. It has to – to enable conscientious journalists to avoid conveying unintended meanings.

NOEL RATCLIFFE

5 Cavendish Avenue
Buxton
Derbyshire

Dear Bruce Page,

Thanks for printing on your front page last week extracts from my 1968 Conference Speech; it offered an improvement, in political and literary standards, on what your readers have had to endure for quite a time. And please, to sustain the new level of argument, will you publish this also?

It is true, as my words in 1968 indicated, that the Labour Government of that decade had much more room for manoeuvre and action, for an independent Socialist initiative, than this Labour Government has or ever had. First, they had then what we have never had since 1974, a full majority in the Commons. However, despite this constraint, we have pushed through a multitude of worthwhile transitional reforms, such as the removal of the Industrial Relations Act of 1971 – with no help from the NEW STATESMAN which urged us, with its customary faint-heartedness, to settle for something like the Heath propositions.

More serious still are the limitations on British independent action imposed by our membership of the Common Market. That is one of the biggest gulfs between 1968 and 1978, and the fact is powerfully illustrated in the article by Stuart Holland in your columns last week. But please don't you have the gall to lecture me on the subject: save your strictures for the NEW STATESMAN of only three years back which urged us all to vote 'Yes' in the referendum.

Third, and no less significant, comparing 1978 with 1968, this Labour Government has had to contend with a world-wide slump, two elements of which are unemployment and inflation on an incomparably worse scale than anything we experienced ten years ago. We must defeat that inflation, as we promised in our 1974 manifestos. We must defeat it, if we are to survive as a Labour Government, if we are to sustain a civilised community, if we are to carry through all the other measures, advocated by me and most other Socialists in 1978 no less than 1968, to overcome both the old and new brands of unemployment. Many of those required measures have been intelligently initiated during the past four years, and many of them can be carried much further in the next five years, provided we get the real majority we need.

So will you, the new editor of a once-great Socialist newspaper, consider whether you will assist us in the task? It may seem unfair to visit the sins of your predecessors on your young head but those who can recall what we had to suffer under Mrs Thatcher's swooning disciple, Paul Johnson, or Ted Heath's secret admirer, Anthony Howard, have a right to be suspicious. No-one will attempt to deny that those who have resolved to sustain the Government have had many painful choices to make. But the alternative was to run away, to yield almighty power at such a dangerous moment in our history to the Thatcher-Keith Joseph counter-revolution. This, I have always believed, would be the real betrayal of those who elected us.

This, by the way, seems to be the course recommended by Mr Christopher Hitchens who drools such a steady flow of malicious tittle-tattle into your columns. May I ask: is he a member of the Labour Party which he so pompously admonishes? Does he still also draw fat fees for attacking trade unionists in the *Daily Express*? Is he one of Paul Johnson's prodigies left behind to serve the Thatcherite cause? Or is he truly what he is widely alleged to be, a dilettante self-styled Trotskyite, a NEW STATESMAN Nigel Dempster, the Socialist Workers' William Hickey? My apologies to Trotsky: nothing so squalid was ever associated before with his great name.

Michael Foot

Christopher Hitchens writes: Mr Foot is entitled to his *ad hominem* remarks, though to be accused of fakery by him is like being sold hair tonic by a man as bald as an egg. His comments are free as air, but could I just say that I only once wrote on trade unions for the *Express* (19 April 1977) and used the space to defend unofficial strikers against the willingness of union leaders to toe the Healey line. I don't think that paper has run any other articles along those lines – certainly not during the days when Mr Foot was one of Lord Beaverbrook's closest associates and one of his greatest admirers too. Oh yes, and the NEW STATESMAN always urged early and total repeal of the Industrial Relations Act.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Craig Raine

The Bulging Biro

The Language of Gerard Manley Hopkins by JAMES MILROY *Deutsch* £7.95
Gerard Manley Hopkins by PADDY KITCHEN *Hamish Hamilton* £7.50

'Tuncks is a good name. Gerard Manley Tuncks. Poor Tuncks,' wrote Hopkins in one of the earliest Journal entries. With time, this whimsical sally has come to seem visionary as well as merely curious. It is as if Hopkins foresaw the patronising critical judgments to come and decided to transfer them, well in advance, to a more appropriate recipient – Tuncks, poor Tuncks. In 'Fosterage', for example, Seamus Heaney retails some literary advice he was given in 1962, presumably by Michael McLaverty, the poem's dedicatee:

> But to hell with overstating it:
> 'Don't have the veins bulging in your biro.'
> And then, 'Poor Hopkins!'. . .

Others have seen Hopkins in a less varicose predicament. Claude Colleer Abbott, editor of the correspondence with Bridges, offers an overweight glutton to balance his praise: 'he was too greedy as poet and prosodist, and too anxious to "load every rift. . .with ore" '. Even 'Dearest Bridges', as Hopkins habitually addressed him, found the poetry violent and artificial if we are to judge from Hopkins's extant replies. In his introduction, though, Bridges was more temperate, mildly disparaging the metaphors as often affected. Poor Hopkins.

Or should it be poor Tuncks? For, against those critics like Austin Warren who conclude their praise with head-shaking over the way copious detail destroys poetic organicism, there are many admirers – admirers who see the biro bulging with muscle, the affectation as originality, the over-loading as prodigal richness. Yet even Hopkins had his doubts: of 'The Sea and the Skylark' he writes to Bridges that 'the saying of it smells, I fear, of the lamp, of salad oil'. And again, 'I find myself that when I am tired things of mine sound strange, forced, and without idiom, which had pleased me well enough in the fresh heat of composition'. Of the slightly bungled 'Loss of the Eurydice', he volunteers:

> Everybody cannot be expected to like my pieces. Moreover, the oddness may make them repulsive at first . . . Indeed when, on somebody returning me the *Eurydice*, I opened and read some lines, reading, as one commonly reads, whether prose or verse, with the eyes, so to say, only, it struck me aghast with a kind of raw nakedness and unmitigated violence I was unprepared for.

One notes, however, that these concessions to Bridges's conventional taste concede little that is absolute: they simply admit that Hopkins, too, was capable sometimes of reading with fatigued attention or without using his ear. As a rule, he defended his output resourcefully and, perhaps, more stoutly than many of his admirers who might, for instance, have grave doubts about the moribund final line of 'Duns Scotus's Oxford' or even the balance of 'Inversnaid', where a powerful reference to Despair as a type of vertigo is abandoned in the celebratory rondo of the last stanza.

There is no question either that Hopkins could be impossibly obscure, as the explanation of 'sakes' in 'Henry Purcell' bears out: 'it is the *sake* of "for the sake of", *foresake, namesake, keepsake.* I mean by it the being a thing has outside itself . . .' Equally, 'Andromeda' continues to baffle us with its allegory, even though Hopkins offered it to Bridges as an endeavour at 'a more Miltonic plainness and severity'. This jibbing at particularities doesn't, however, confront the general problem of Hopkins's poetry which, though it can be simple, strikes many readers as massively over-done, whether bulging with veins or muscles.

The case against Hopkins is put most forcibly, if anachronistically, by Dryden, whom Hopkins revered. As it happens, however, it is also the case against Shakespeare:

> Yet I cannot deny that he has his failings; but they are not so much in the passions themselves as in his manner of expression: he often obscures his meaning by his words, and sometimes makes it unintelligible. I will not say of so great a poet that he distinguished not the blown puffy style from true sublimity; but I may venture to maintain that the fury of his fancy often transported him beyond the bounds of judgement, either in coining of new words and phrases, or racking words which were in use into the violence of a catechresis. 'Tis not that I would explode the use of metaphors from passions, for Longinus thinks 'em necessary to raise it: but to use 'em at every word, to say nothing without a metaphor, a simile, an image, or description, is I doubt to smell a little too strongly of the buskin.

Or of the lamp. Or salad oil. Poor Shakespeare. Poor Hopkins. Poor, poor Tuncks. One might almost leave the argument there, with Dryden wriggling on his own point, evidently embarrassed to convinct his favourite writer of vulgarity. But why did Dryden find himself in this uncomfortable position? Anxiety of influence appears to be the main cause: he was seeking a theoretical route out of the creative cul-de-sac presented by the achievement of Shakespeare and the Metaphysicals. The pressure of the past shows itself in the rejection, after the early *Annus Mirabilis,* of the conceited style and in every re-write of Shakespeare, however bold we may find them. Hopkins, on the contrary, was more deeply assured of his own originality and wrote to Bridges: 'the effect of studying masterpieces is to make me admire and do otherwise.' This was more radical than any of Dryden's recurring attempts to polish up Shakespeare or his effort merely to refine the numbers.

Refinement, in fact, is one key to Dryden's limitations as a critic. It led him, for instance, to reject Jonson as a 'perfect pattern of imitation' – on the curious grounds that Jonson's *forte,* low-life conversation, could hardly be expected to amuse gentlemen in the theatre when they avoided it in the streets. Dryden's literary taste, it is clear, was a function of his social taste. Literature should be polite, easy and polished, not vulgarly straining for effect. Hopkins saw things differently. For a start, as James Milroy points out in his excellent study, he was a fascinated student of low-life rustic language – a word-hoard he plundered to make his utterly distinctive style. Secondly, his idea of poetry involved the stress of continuous effort. This much is obvious from his comments on Hardy and Blackmore, where his praise is tempered by a crucial reservation: 'these writers rise only to their great strokes; they do not write continuously well.' Hopkins did, or tried to, repeatedly insisting to Bridges that his work was free from padding. He wrote with unbroken and candid artifice – an artifice which, with the exception of the terrible sonnets, has led inevitably to the charge of artificiality.

This charge is best refuted, paradoxically enough, by the critic who did most to establish it on the critical statute-book – Dr Johnson. Johnson may have condemned 'Lycidas' and the metaphysicals for insincerity and artificiality, but he inadvertently answers himself in his defence of Shakespeare's failure to observe the unities. They are not binding, he briskly avers, because 'it is false that any representation is mistaken for reality'. Similarly, in the case of Hopkins, only a naïve reader would confuse artistic utterance with real utterance. Art, even the art that hides art, is, after all, artificial.

James Milroy avoids these large issues. His purpose is to explain and describe Hopkins's use of language rather than defend or evaluate the canon. Yet, underlying his scrupulous objectivity is the idea of *tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner* and his scattered reservations only serve, by their rarity, to endorse Hopkins's poetic practice.

Dr Milroy's Hopkins is a philologist whose aesthetic arises out of a conviction that 'the poetical language of an age should be the current language heightened'. By current language, Milroy conclusively proves, Hopkins meant *speech*, not prose, influenced as he was by the new science of philology, led by Max Müller and Jacob Grimm. The conclusions that follow from this simple distinction are manifold: sprung rhythm is shown, as Hopkins always maintained, to be based on natural speech rhythm; the many inconsistent 'archaisms' in Hopkins's diction turn out to be current in conservative dialectal usage; the disjointed syntax that disturbs so many readers is seen as true to the grammar of *speech*, with all its parentheses, verbless exclamations, explanatory repetitions and reprises of the main verb.

If this is the case, though, why does much of Hopkins seem utterly different from speech? Milroy's answer takes up the second half of his book which is an account of the different ways Hopkins *heightened* current language – phonetically, through consonant and vowel rhyme so complex that Dr Milroy resorts to tables and diagrams; in his diction, where Hopkins freely coined from root-words, a practice he felt was legitimised by the work of Müller and Barnes; and, finally, in his syntax.

There are so many sensible insights in Dr Milroy's book (like his observation that Hopkins's inversions were deliberate and could not have been forced on him by the supreme freedom of sprung rhythm) that reservations

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seem carping. Even so, some of his pages are distinctly hard going. The grammarian's bent scarcely allows for a simple Hopkins at all. Sometimes, things are 'explained' in the manner of Johnson's notorious definition: 'NET – anything made with interstitial vacuities.' Finally, at some points, Dr Milroy overstates the case for the philologist Hopkins, partly because he stretches the meaning of 'inscape' a long way beyond its primary meaning of 'design' and 'pattern', a meaning which is clearly assigned in a letter to Bridges.

'Harry Ploughman', for example, is a complex poem but not so linguistically enriched as Dr Milroy maintains. In the description of the blown hair on Harry's arms ('a broth of goldish flue breathed round'), I see a stunning metaphor which likens the action of the wind to someone blowing a circle in soup to cool it. Dr Milroy argues instead for *broth* as a kind of semantic carrier, infested with associations from 'the semantic fields in which it is normally used in ordinary language'. The trouble is that these associations are entirely unhelpful in their irrelevance: 'the *broth* of the whirlpool is also applicable to Harry Ploughman's arms.' Hopkins's image is thus effectively smothered. Equally, we learn that *ropes* are not simply ropes, but also clouds and waterfalls; that 'curded' means not only 'hardened' but is also associated with clouds. Which is all very well in its way, except that Hopkins is describing hard muscles, not insubstantial, misty ones.

Paddy Kitchen is also guilty of overstating her thesis – the conflict between sensuality and purity in Hopkins's life and art. So much so that she reads 'The Windhover' as 'a metaphor for sexual suppression' and observes that his rhythms are 'similar to those of imaginative sexual touch'. For all its excesses, though, her biography will undoubtedly supersede that of Bernard Bergonzi: he may be a cooler, even chilly, guide to the poetry, but Mrs Kitchen's research is much fuller, as a glance at her bibliography shows. She has ransacked the libraries for contemporary accounts and uses them very effectively indeed to fill in the gaps where Hopkins's Journal and letters are silent. In addition, she is much more in sympathy with her subject than Professor Bergonzi, and if this means she is sometimes a little breathy in her praise, it also means that she brings a warmth and understanding to poor Hopkins that Bergonzi lacked.

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Geoffrey Robertson

The Laughing Policeman

In the Office of Constable by SIR ROBERT MARK *Collins* £6.95

These reflections might more aptly be titled, *In the Office of the Newspaper Editor*. Constable Mark spent only 18 months on the Manchester beat; Commissioner Mark went on patrol at Printing House Square. He was soon brought in from the cold, 'touched and encouraged to be invited as guest of honour to a rather splendid lunch given by Lord Thompson in the editorial boardroom'. He credits *The Times* with engineering his appointment, and the *Sunday Times* with consistently publishing the gospel according to St Mark. It was all a far cry from the time when the young Chief Constable of Leicester gratefully accepted the DPP's advice: 'it is not incumbent on a chief officer of police to take formal notice of anything he may read in a newspaper.'

As Commissioner, Sir Robert took great notice of what he read, and seems quickly to have realised that the most satisfactory notices are self-inspired. He broke the corrupt nexus between detective and crime reporter by going over their heads to the editorial boardroom, and he still laments the 'irresponsible and ill-informed' Police Federation spokesmen who let gut-feelings slip into print to belie the more polished and more politic utterances of their superiors. There was no shortage of clacquers to applaud his triumphal progress from Balcombe Street to the Spaghetti House, but in 1976 he lost the war of Jenkins' ear when the press refused to support his opposition to the Police Complaints Board. It was time for the prima donna to leave the Met.

Now Sir Robert is back in the limelight, singing like a canary. He gives a blow-by-blow account of his battles with those who heard and saw no evil at Scotland Yard while the long arm of the law was replaced by the greased palm of the CID. His textbook analysis of institutional corruption will endure for longer than his remedies. 'Set a policeman to catch a policeman' works only when the set policemen have the will to catch, and A 10 without Mark is already beginning to look like an engine without a starter. Appointments to the Complaints Board have been notably lacking in spark, and Mark may be right in his prediction that Lord Plowden's quango of elderly establishmentarians will spend its time dancing in the dark.

His criticisms of the bizarre British desire to punish minor violators of moral and highway codes make welcome reading. Scarcely a day passes without a police posse rampaging through some corner newsagent in the unrelenting quest for obscenity, while vast reserves of scarce police manpower are devoted to proving beyond reasonable doubt that cars have been improperly parked, genitals incorrectly displayed, or bodies illegally positioned for soliciting. Mark wants the police withdrawn from the bedrooms and parking bays of the nation, although his wish for improved laws requires more detailed argument in his book, just as it deserved more of his attention during his time at Scotland Yard. Ironically, he took a rather petulant delight in relegating submissions from the NCCL to the tray reserved for cranks and crackpots: in fact, he has more in common with civil libertarians than he cares to admit.

On matters of hard-core policing, however, Mark remains reactionary. The Complaints Board was the first of an inevitable series of reforms: the woolly codes at present governing interrogation of suspects require statutory force, and discretion to prosecute must be placed in more detached hands than those of arresting officers. Sir Robert implacably opposes such moves, because the British police are 'the most accountable and therefore the most acceptable police in the world', and because 'the police are politically independent'. Unfortunately, their unique degree of accountability is largely accountability to themselves, and the author is hardly an example of political impartiality. He lobbied anxiously against Michael Foot's Bill on picketing, he denounces the Shrewsbury pickets as 'worse than murderers', and he proudly parades his family philosophy – 'Them as don't work don't eat.' His blacklist includes the SWP ('not a whit less odious than the National Front'), inner-London schools, Grunwick demonstrators, and Harold Wilson's 'mediocre crew' of Labour ministers (Roy Jenkins honourably excepted). Commissioner Mark, in short, was Bernard Levin with a truncheon. An engaging figure, certainly: the sort of man you might happily permit to marry your daughter. But would you give him complete discretion to lock her up?

Not even Sir Robert can claim that the security service is 'accountable' for its actions. When he demanded a judicial inquiry into the allegations of executed IRA informer Kenneth Lennon, he was told, to his amazement, that the Yard would have to provide its own whitewash. The Home Secretary, flanked by mysterious 'advisors', refused to subject the secret police to independent investigation. During the Spaghetti House siege, sophisticated eavesdropping equipment 'provided us with a sound recording of all that was going on in the locked room and then a reasonably good television picture'. Telephone tapping requires the Home Secretary's warrant, but no such legal trifles regulate police use of electronic bugging devices. Nobody would wish to restrain their use against possible murderers, but it does seem time to provide some democratic supervision of their potential deployment against political activists who might be deemed 'worse than murderers'.

When the mob storms the Temple, however, Sir Robert will mount the barricades himself, leading the chant to nationalise the legal profession. The phrase 'criminal lawyer' is tautologous in his grammar. It is tempting to regard his initial onslaught in the 1973 Dimbleby Lecture as a sop to a disgruntled force: his stocks rocketed at the Met when he put the boot into the Bar. Perhaps the two Royal Commissions currently investigating the subject will be favoured to receive his long-awaited evidence, but the readers of his memoirs are less fortunate. The law has its charlatans, but Mark still has difficulty in distinguishing between fearless advocacy and fraudulent rhetoric.

Sir Robert's desire to 'provide for my family' (too difficult, apparently, on his Commissioner's salary) and his distaste for the Complaints Board combined to produce his premature departure from the Office of Constable. It was a pity he did not stick around to apply his mind to the greatest present defect of the Met: its failure of strategy and manpower to combat corporate crime. He seems to have had little time to concern himself with the problems of grass-roots policing, and perhaps his doctrinaire hostility to industrial action hindered the development of acceptable tactics for dealing with political disturbances. But his fight against corruption won well-deserved applause, and his views on penology merit a larger audience. The finest achievement of his career may merely be that he wrote a reasonably candid book about it as soon as he left office. Mark's lip is preferable to McNee's hammer.

Philip French

Light Heavies

Shadow Box by GEORGE PLIMPTON *Deutsch* £6.95

George Plimpton is often spoken of as a Walter Mitty figure. This isn't quite accurate. Thurber's henpecked suburbanite inhabited a world of fantasy in which he triumphed heroically in every conventional guise. Plimpton on the other hand acts out the Mittyesque fantasies in real life and invariably falls flat on his face. In his funniest TV film, he consulted Bob Hope, Woody Allen and Milton Berle before taking the stage as a stand-up comedian at a Las Vegas night-spot to perform an act so unfunny that even Hughie Green might have winced. He persuaded Howard Hawks to give him a walk-on part in *Rio Lobo,* and with a single line ('OK, Whitey') and one bit of business (dying at John Wayne's feet) established himself as the most inept heavy ever to hit the Hollywood trail.

These failures are not solely due to lack of talent. They occur because Plimpton lacks an ability for impersonation or dissembling. Belonging as he does to the East Coast upper-class Wasp establishment, he lacks the protean quality that enables so many Americans, both actors and ordinary citizens, to change roles and social status so readily. His friend Mailer gets it right when he writes (in *The Fight*) of Plimpton's face reacting with 'a Yankee pinch, that subtle tightening of expression when getting ready to put out a candle with one's fingers', and speaking in 'his fine voice, so reminiscent of the restrained taste for zany leaps and happy improprieties that we used to hear in the voice of Cary Grant'.

Plimpton is most out of place on the subcultural safaris he most often takes – those into the world of sport, where for the past twenty years he has been practising his brand of 'participatory journalism' on behalf of Time Inc.'s glossy *Sports Illustrated.* His previous sports books have centred entirely on his involvement as a pseudo-professional participant – the crisp report on pitching at

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Yankee Stadium, *Out of My League* (probably the last book for which Ernest Hemingway wrote a pre-publication puff), and the longer accounts of playing professional football, *Paper Lion*, and competing on the golf circuit, *The Bogey Man*. This new one merely takes off from a brief and mildly bloody encounter he had with Archie Moore, then world light-heavyweight champion, in the grimy Stillman's gym in New York. It is, however, the most engaging section of the book.

As usual Plimpton prepared seriously, training, reading, seeking the advice of experts. He was at first reassured to learn from the 1807 *Art and Practice of British Boxing* that 'both parties should keep in the best humours possible', then alarmed to discover pages later that

> a blow under the left ear forces back the blood which proceeds from head to heart so that the vessels and sinews of the brain are overcharged, particularly the smaller ones, which being of too delicate a texture to resist so great a charge of blood, *burst* ...

His hero becomes 'Fainting Phil' Scott, the British 'horizontal heavyweight' of the 1920s, who won most of his fights by pretending he received a low punch.

The fight with Moore passed off quietly. Indeed, the fashionable crowd had departed from Stillman's gym when Plimpton's friend the Duchess d'Uzès arrived in her Rolls-Royce, demanding, 'Where's everybody?' 'Everybody is not here,' said Lou Stillman, in what Budd Schulberg called his 'garbage-disposal voice'.

The rest of the book is about the lasting attachment to the fight game the Moore meeting engendered in Plimpton, and most especially about following his friend Cassius Clay from the first Liston contest to the historic 1974 fight with Foreman in Zaire. Much of this ground is pretty familiar stuff, and Plimpton has thus adopted a deliberately idiosyncratic approach. There is a deal of enjoyable boxing lore, literary chat about Hemingway and Marianne Moore, a long chapter on various celebrities' death fantasies, and accounts of that fashionable obsession the rich and intellectual have with the backstage world of top sportsmen. The latter fascination is known derisively among professional athletes as 'jock-sniffing'.

Despite the scent of praise he squirts over them, the stories invariably show up his friends in an unfavourable light. The book's most memorable image of Mailer is of a desperate man spending an evening vainly trying to get the indicator of a 'Test Your Strength' machine above the 'Mr Average Man' mark after the ageing cartoonist Chas Addams had rung the bell with his first easy swing of the mallet. When he quotes Budd Schulberg (who has forgotten more about boxing than Plimpton will ever know, even if he doesn't write as elegantly as the co-founder of *Paris Review*), the stammer is cruelly reproduced on the page. Plimpton retails Elaine Dundy's opinion that Kenneth Tynan's attack on *In Cold Blood* was motivated by pique: 'He wanted to write that book *In Cold Blood* himself. What was he doing – *Oh Calcutta!*. Oh, no, it was just jealousy.'

The book doesn't dig deeply into the mystique of boxing and its hold on the literary mind. Brecht, for instance, a key theorist in this area, isn't even mentioned. Nor does Plimpton go into the changing social and economic basis of the sport. His claim that what holds his book together is a vague theme 'about people taking matters into their own hands – gangsters, mercenaries, jealous lovers, outraged writers' is so unconvincing that it hardly gets out of its corner. But he attributes this concern to a 'near-vigilante, anti-bureaucratic attitude' inspired by guilt over the failure, his own and others', to do anything about the persecution of Muhammad Ali in the late Sixties.

Many writers surface in the pages of this book, but none of them is as memorably eloquent as Ali's trainer, the great Bundini Brown. It was Bundini who said his man was going to float like a butterfly and sting like a bee, and it was he who said of the famous Frazier left-hook that did for Ali in the Fight of the Century, 'That punch blew out all the candles on the cake.'

John Coleman

Rear Window

Hitch: The Life and Work of Alfred Hitchcock
by JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR *Faber* £6.50

Visiting Rome in the early Seventies, Hitch bowed gently out of an audience with the Pope. 'What would I do', he speculated, 'if the Holy Father said that in this world, with so much sex and violence, I ought to lay off?' He may not have been joking; or so surmises John Russell Taylor. This authorised biography grew out of long-standing admiration and a series of 'comfortable, social lunches' with the Master: after 18 months of such amiable auditioning, Hitchcock said yes and doors began opening to Mr Taylor everywhere. The result is as scrupulously researched and soberly informed as one would expect. It is particularly helpful on the early days: the rather solitary Catholic boyhood in Leytonstone, with the famous story of the five-year-old's brief incarceration in a police cell verified by his sister; the low profile at a strict boarding school; the first job in an electric cable company; the crucial move to Famous-Players-Lasky, where the lad designed title-cards and learned all he could about the industry.

Fourteen years ago, in a chapter on Hitchcock in his *Cinema Eye, Cinema Ear*, the author tended to play down the 23 British films ('quite simply, he has made his best films since 1950'). Time and a deeper knowledge have redressed the balance somewhat. Themes and situations to recur in later works are already present in *The Lodger* (1926), which 'does take a very dark view of human nature and traps us into accepting it by subtly but consistently distorting our moral perspectives and leaving us slightly disoriented, at the film-maker's mercy'. Elsewhere, it is suggested that 'the characteristic subject of his art, often taken to be suspense, is more accurately anxiety', an excellent aperçu which throws a flood of light on such American movies as *The Wrong Man* as well as on their creator.

For Hitchcock admits to endless irrational anxieties. Mr Taylor sees him as three men: the professional, the private and the public. The first wears a dark suit and tie whatever the climate, a sartorial code ensuring a working formality on set, where politeness is the norm and temperament discouraged. Movements of camera and actors have generally been pre-planned. There is little room for the unexpected, the disturbing: Hitch hates confrontations. 'Curious hat the fellow was wearing,' he commented when a studio guard burst in with the first news of Pearl Harbour. The private man lives a quiet, well-regulated, domestic life with his beloved Alma (whom he married in 1926), is uninterested in politics, loathes eggs, and goes regularly to church. The public figure is something of a prankster, liable to doze off at social occasions, appearing for the purpose of publicity as Queen Victoria or in a Little Lord Fauntleroy suit or crouched next to a St Bernard with a brandy keg strapped round his neck. He has always been concerned to woo the press. A streak of cruelty may creep in, as when – years ago – he fed a drink spiked with laxative to a prop man and then paid him to stay handcuffed overnight.

Mr Taylor drops the odd bombshell (a memory of a French girl watching her lover pee lay behind the Grant-Bergman kiss sequence in *Notorious*; Mark really wants to catch Marnie thieving and rape her on the spot; Hitchcock gave up sex 40 years ago), but uncritically. Closeness has lent enchantment and he is kinder to *Frenzy* and *Family Plot*, for instance, than they deserve. Yet the materials for a profounder portrait of the man who is no gentleman when it comes – on screen – to icy blondes or the anatomies of murder are laid before us with delicate skill: Truffaut's hero-worshipping big book looks increasingly like an outside job, with Hitch feeding his French admirer taffy. Hitchcock, says Mr Taylor, is his films, and we and posterity are left – thanks to this privileged work – in a cannier position to judge them.

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J. P. Stern

The Trials

Franz Kafka: Letters to Friends, Family and Editors translated by Richard and Clara Winston *John Calder* £19.50

The first of these letters was written when Kafka was 19 and a law-student at the German University of Prague, the last a fortnight before he died in a sanatorium near Vienna on 3 June 1924. The volume corresponds roughly to the *Briefe* of 1958 and excludes the letters to Felice Bauer, Milena Jesenská and his sister Ottla, all published in separate collections. The translation is both skilful and accurate, the editorial notes unobtrusive, and the volume ends with a chronology which helps to provide some definition to Kafka's shapeless life.

The majority of these letters are written from sanatoria and hotels (where he felt more at home than at home), and over half of them are addressed to his lifelong friend and posthumous editor, the critic and novelist Max Brod who, like Kafka himself, belonged to the cultural enclave of German-Jewish Prague. Its peculiarity is like an open wound in Kafka's consciousness. He sympathised with the anti-German feelings of the Czechs, shared something of the anti-Jewish feelings of the Germans, and loathed and feared the atmosphere of the Prague business world represented by his father. Socialism, Zionism and devout Judaism offered an alternative but unattainable mode of life. Finally he escaped to Berlin where, almost destitute during the hard winter of the monstrous German inflation, he lived with a Polish girl who was working in a Jewish orphanage. The break came too late, less than a year before he died, starved and strangled to death by his tubercular larynx. The letters are followed by seven almost unbearable pages of 'Conversation Slips' – notes written to his friends when he was too ill to speak.

Without being either plaintive or self-pitying, these letters are above all a record of Franz Kafka dying. 'We human beings ought to stand before one another as reverently, as reflectively, as lovingly, as we would before the entrance to hell,' he writes in 1903; and in August 1917 this inward hell at last ('it is almost a relief') takes the outward visible form of a haemorrhage: 'Sometimes it seems to me that my brain and lungs came to an agreement without my knowledge. "Things can't go on in this way," said the brain, and after five years the lungs were ready to help.' He has not sought the disease, yet 'I have come to think that tuberculosis, or the kind of tuberculosis that I have, is not a special disease, or not a disease that deserves a special name, but only the germ of death itself, intensified ...' Moreover: 'Why am I talking of actual dying? It is just the same in life', for 'everything is all of a piece', and it is the writer's – *this* writer's – task to perceive 'this magnificent congruence' of everything with everything else, and make it manifest.

The story of the illness is never abandoned, yet the portrait that emerges is not that of a sick monster of self-centredness. What strikes one is the bedrock of decency, his complete loyalty, his warm and consistent interest in other people, his incapacity for censoriousness in any form. Exaggerating or perhaps oversimplifying his goodness, Kafka's friends admire, pity and misunderstand him. Max Brod in particular, anxious to avoid the 'get a grip on yourself' attitude, attributes to him a spiritual fortitude Kafka did not possess, and tries to reassure him with sincere yet imperceptive praise. But for critics to complain of this is beside the point. For one thing, these misunderstandings are the occasions of some of Kafka's most interesting writing:

> You say you don't understand my position. It is very simple as long as one does not try to look too deep below the surface ... When you see me, a lubber of a boy, sitting stooped over a multiplication table ... 'Eight years,' you think. 'This must be an amazingly thorough person. He is still working on multiplication. But no matter how thorough he is, he really ought to be able to do it by now. Therefore I don't understand him.' But that I could be totally lacking in any faculty for mathematics, or that I don't cheat out of funk, or most likely – that I have lost that faculty out of funk – none of this occurs to you. And yet it is nothing but the commonest sort of funk, the fear of death. Like the person who cannot resist the temptation to swim out to sea, and is blissful to be so carried away – 'Now you are a great swimmer' – and suddenly for no particular reason he raises himself up and sees only the sky and the sea, and on the waves is only his own little head and he is seized by a horrible fear and nothing else matters

– except the task of setting it all down and, in that act, to refute the incapacity by making it memorable.

Moreover, these misunderstandings, which often arouse his sense of the ridiculous, do not impair his relationships with other people. For to the extent that they are unlike himself, are *other* people, they are for him objects of total attention and respect: in each of them 'everything can be found if it is honestly searched for'. It is this respect, coupled with self-forgetfulness – 'a writer's first prerequisite' – which accounts for the fact that in all these hundreds of letters there is not a single wounding or catty word, and in only one a self-interested intention. The jokes, too gentle to bear transcription, are almost always at his own expense. The disdain and dislike with which men face each other he reserves for himself: 'Evidently on account of my dignity, on account of my pride ... I can only love what I can place so high above me that I cannot reach it.' This is no pose but a realisation that what he is and what he has to say are representative, 'a product of the age (like my instinct and like my disease) ... our times in general and my own as well have been painful and continue to be, my own more consistently than the times.'

Yet Kafka writes throughout – in these letters and everywhere else – as the most private of persons. Hardly any public events are mentioned; the Great War is two years old before it is even briefly alluded to; of the murder of Rathenau in 1922 he says, 'the subject extends far beyond my horizon. Even the horizon outside my window is too big for me'. Again this is no pose but the sign of that intuitive tact which dictates to him with unfailing assurance the precise area which his art can encompass – that art to which ultimately all is related and all is sacrificed. He claims no merit for this sacrifice, derives no satisfaction from it. The writer in him 'is barely possible in the broil of earthly life, is only a construct of sensuality ... He makes it possible for men to enjoy sin without guilt, almost without guilt'. The world – and here is the true, unselfish yet guilty ground of his self-centredness – provides the metaphors for his writing, for the accomplishment of his life's only task.

Kafka's stories have often been described as metaphors of the human condition. These letters go some way to confirm this view, yet they also provide an important correction. While they offer no direct commentary on the stories, they show that the device which unlocks his literary secret is not metaphor but metonymy. He does not replace non-literary facts by literary images. He presents detailed individual scenes in such a way that they imply the whole of which they are but a part – 'for everything is all of a piece'. His illness is not a metaphor or symbol or allegory of anything. It is part of his dying, and thus of life itself. If there is anything which mitigates the gloom these letters leave in one's mind, it is the immense descriptive and analytical intelligence at work throughout; it is the dignity that attaches to all true insight accurately formulated.

James Fenton

Ins Archiv

The Flounder by GÜNTER GRASS *Secker & Warburg* £5.95

In the Egg and Other Poems by GÜNTER GRASS *Secker & Warburg* £4.90

Why is Günter Grass so difficult? One problem for the English reader arises from the translations themselves. Not only is Grass intrinsically difficult to render into English. It also seems to me that his translators are not above introducing a few problems of their own. Christopher Middleton, who is responsible for a few of the poems, tends to import ambiguities and inventions into the text:

> Thou shalt draw with sharpened pencil
> Brides of shade and shade of snow ...

These brides of shade are interesting – there is something art nouveau, or even decadent, about them. But they do not appear in Grass's poem, which commands simply: 'Thou shalt shade in with a sharpened pencil the brides and the snow.'

I am diffident about making such complaints, but the fact is that I have more than once been flummoxed by a point in the translation only to find that the original is much clearer. The following comes from Michael Hamburger:

> Don't write a letter,
> Letters that vex us end up in Texas.

Why in Texas? One turns to the German:

> Schreib keinem Brief,
> Brief kommt ins Archiv.

'Texas', one gathers, is an abbreviation of the library of the University of Texas, and the bit about the letters vexing us has been added in order to reproduce somehow – any old how – the internal rhyme of the original. But this rendition could hardly be called happy. Indeed, it makes one wonder what the hell the translator has been up to elsewhere.

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Grass seems to be conscious of the problems he creates for his translators, and at the beginning of this year he held a week-long seminar in Frankfurt, in order to discuss questions arising from *Der Butt*, his latest novel. A report in *Die Zeit* at the time summarised the difficulties. Grass 'does not write the smooth, everyday, easily readable language which has become standard. He makes demands on his readers and it is just too bad if they cannot meet them. Grass can afford not to make concessions'. So we find the author moving from Middle High German to modern slang, by way of at least four different dialects, the jargon of politicians, bureaucrats, women's liberation, cookery books and biology. In addition there are Grass's own neologisms, and his habit of playing around with German word-order and grammar. Nine of his twelve translators attended the Frankfurt seminar. The others were obliged under the terms of the contract to meet the author before completing their versions.

Each translator has his own peculiar problems. There are a lot of mushrooms in this book; there are no mushrooms apparently in Norway (can this be true?) and consequently no popular names for them. For the Japanese version, it was impossible to imitate the various archaic styles. In the Romance languages, neologisms are more difficult to coin. Nor does Spain offer the equivalent range of dialects. The English translator, Ralph Manheim, did not attend the Frankfurt seminar, so there is no reference in the *Zeit* article to his particular difficulties. However, a translator's note does explain that even the title has caused trouble: 'Butt' means simply a flatfish; Grass is obviously talking about a turbot – 'as is made clear on page 30 of the text with some violence to the original' (ominous words). However, the translators of the Grimm tale on which the novel is based all use the word flounder, and so does Manheim, on the grounds that 'he is no ordinary fish, but an archetypal one, harking back to the dawn of human consciousness . . .'

Oh my God. If by this time the reader has the feeling that we are faced here with the equivalent, say, of the Pushtu version of *Finnegans Wake,* he will not be far wrong. But don't be put off by all this hoo-ha. Why not be put off by the novel itself?

> When fat Gret let a fart because I'd been licking her too meticulously, we both relished the breeze. After all, as usual on Wednesday, we had eaten beans with turnips and peppered pork chops, and anyone who is repelled by his sweetheart's farts has no business talking about love . . . All right, laugh. Get that stuffy look off your face. Have a heart. It's funny, isn't it?

No, it isn't funny. And even if it had been, it would have ceased to be funny at the moment when the author started bullying us into having a good old Rabelaisian chortle.

There is no doubt something deficient in the translation, when it comes to capturing tone of voice, idiom and colloquial speech. But one could live with this, and take certain virtues on trust, were it not for the fundamental weakness of the book's conception. It is one thing to have a miraculous fish, whose career is followed over the millennia. Add to that a miraculous first person, an archetypal male, who reappears throughout the story in different guises, and a series of nine (or eleven) female cooks, who also seem to be nine versions of an archetype, and further complicate matters by moving backwards and forwards in time – what you create, inevitably as it seems to me, is an epic tedium. Every moment in this book is much like every other moment. There is no progression. There is history, but the history becomes unhistory. There are changes of place, but every place turns into the same place. There are characters, but they are all the same character.

At times, when we are given a journalistic account of a trip to Calcutta or modern Gdansk, or when a highly attractive and unusual recipe is outlined, the interest returns. But these are moments when the reader is as it were on furlough; a few lines later he has to grit his teeth and go back to the mad barracks of the novel itself. This experience is like turning up cold sober in the middle of a drunken party. One cannot see what the joke is. One does not want to see. Those tell-tale sentences in *Die Zeit* – 'he makes demands on his readers and it is just too bad if they cannot meet them. Grass can afford not to make concessions' – put in a nutshell just what is wrong with this book. For while the author has every right to make his demands, the reader too has rights. He has a right to object to flabby, repetitious, flatulent prose, and the obscurantist verse with which this novel is overloaded. The respect of the author for the reader is not a concession. Such respect is signally lacking in this work.

Jeremy Treglown

On the Side

Two Brothers by STANLEY MIDDLETON *Hutchinson* £4.95
The Honey Tree by JANICE ELLIOTT *Hodder & Stoughton* £4.75
God on the Rocks by JANE GARDAM *Hamish Hamilton* £4.95
The Lovely Years by REINER KUNZE *Sidgwick & Jackson* £3.95
Gold Foil by RUPERT PENNANT-REA *Bodley Head* £4.95

If the differences between Stanley Middleton's novels were not as subtly well-defined as those between his characters, *Two Brothers* would be in danger of the kind of repetition he must sometimes fear. The novelist in *Ends and Means* certainly had this worry, his most recent fiction seeming to him 'a patchwork job, its faults hidden by a sharpness of realistic detail, a worthless return to an exhausted vein'. There's no patchwork in *Two Brothers*, except insofar as the structure consists of a working together of the main narrative with recollected earlier incidents, slowly and unchronologically piecing together the protagonists' lives: Frank, a successful poet who makes a living as a schoolteacher; his old girlfriend and later mistress Kathleen; and his brother, her husband Jack, an aggressively successful Nottinghamshire businessman. And although the 'vein' is familiar – the sheer emotional attrition beneath people's unrevealing ordinariness – it's by no means exhausted.

The novel's centre of interest is the shifting balance of sympathy between the cautious, sensitive Frank and Jack, initially seen as a fat philanderer, a grossly complacent sexual thug. It becomes increasingly clear that Frank's poetry lives on the capital of his brother's experiences, and as the novel proceeds Kathleen's marriage to the man of action, rather than to the contemplative who first proposed to her, comes to make surprisingly optimistic sense.

The scales are in the end perhaps too heavily loaded on Jack's side (he's revealed as a modest hero, a furtive rescuer of children from railway lines and old ladies from burning houses) and it's a pity – though, in the given structure, inevitable – that the switch mostly occurs after Frank's death two-thirds of the way through, which has reduced the story's momentum. There are times in this latter part of the book – so much of it taken up with unexpected discoveries about Frank's and Jack's past – when Middleton's writing seems unusually washy. I'm not sure how much of this to attribute to his generally successful use of style-change as a device for characterisation. It's arguably appropriate, for example, that the educated southerner Kathleen, in a moment of deep middle-aged, middle-class gloom, should be seen through a cloud of sub-Eliotic clichés of inanition; but clichés they remain:

> She was not shocked by her paralysis of will, but by the desolation, desiccation in herself, the knowledge of nothing accomplished in an inexplicable, dumb present, a future of dependence on the non-existent goodwill of others, without aim or achievement.

Elsewhere there's happily less room for doubt, and Middleton movingly succeeds in showing hopeless, commonplace suffering being almost arbitrarily assuaged, without losing his distinctive, unsentimental view of individual isolation. And in all this his acute surface realism produces its customary shocks – reversals like Kathleen's drinking gin 'with the élan of a schoolgirl', or choirboys' descanting 'Oh enter then His gates with praise' with 'wooden ferocity', so true to life that they hardly seem paradoxical.

Middleton has no monopoly of fiction about bourgeois adultery, though the comparisons this week's publications provide – by no

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means feeble in themselves – help gauge his depth of sympathy and the unostentatious alertness of his style. Janice Elliott's latest novel also inhabits valium-and-Volvo country, though of a less interesting, home-counties kind: rich Londoners setting up a commuter-belt rural commune. She writes rather like John Fowles – full of close observation devoted so lovingly to such objectionable people that you're only moderately confident that she's not, alas, sending them up. She knows how miserable successful, well-organised people can be, and how vulnerable parents are, and gives plenty of room for the mutual discussion of these angsts: 'Susie, we don't hate Jerry, we simply don't know him', etc. But like Fowles, and unlike Middleton, she can't leave well alone. She assumes her readers are philistine dimwits who need everything spelled out, however trivial the narrative moment itself. So, she describes a litter of pigs: 'Six hairless sucklers and one runt. Mother ignored the runt' – except that what she actually says is: 'Darwinist mother subscribed to the survival of the fittest – ignored the runt.' Um, you mean . . .? Oh! I think I see what . . . Right!

Jane Gardam's is a completely unponderous, elegantly constructed story about the daughter of a Fundamentalist couple between the wars – the puritanical father falling for the nanny, and the wife reverting, in revenge, to a childhood lover. The coastal setting establishes a strong layer of reference to nonconformist images of salvation and damnation – shipwrecks and lifeboats, and the rocks of the title – and a deftly extended time-scheme enables the events to reflect big changes of attitude brought about partly by the first world war. At the end, soldiers roll up the barbed wire on the beach. The painful and unnecessary tangles of religious superstition and sexual taboo, we are made to feel, have been similarly swept away. There are some successful passages of near-lyrical writing, and an unexpectedly hilarious episode of high bedroom farce.

With the publishers getting into gear for Christmas, or whatever else it is that gives the fiction industry its autumnal spurt of quality, there's little space to do more than report the publication in English of Reiner Kunze's *The Lovely Years*, a kind of short commonplace-book about life – especially teenage life – in East Germany, including some moving anecdotes and other fragments about 1968, and some bits of poetry by currently banned, though prominent, authors. One of the most memorable items is also, as it happens, a funny one about adultery. A Czech writer recalls waking beside his wife, appalled to hear a girl outside the door calling his name. The wife answers. To his immense relief, it's not one of his mistresses, but someone bringing news of the invasion of Prague. 'Was I pleased it was only the tanks!'

Gold Foil is a thriller about international economics, an apparent contradiction in terms that Rupert Pennant-Rea resolves partly through his expert knowledge and partly through the horrifying scale of the possible outcome of the action – a Russian-American confrontation over South African gold. There are rather too many passages of the 'As the Jumbo turned at the head of Runway 1 and began to rev its engines, Caroline stared out of the window. Grey tarmac, grey clouds, grey rain' kind, but the story keeps you going, and there's a chilling surprise on the last page.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Julian Barnes

Tumble Talk

On *Word for Word* (BBC-2), Philip Howard took several minutes to explain that an Australian pidgin term, *walkabout*, has changed its meaning since being adopted into English. An ordinary and, you might think, a desirable phenomenon. But not to Howard; and not to the current brand of linguistic prescriptivists – usually of right-wing persuasion and public-school origin – who seem to imagine that whenever a word shifts its meaning nowadays, this is a tiny symbol of the yobs taking over; who prefer the language of Malherbe to that of the Pléïade. I'll be interested to see how this quaint grousers' slot on the show develops. It opened with Bernard Levin pompously pointing out for the 500th time the difference between *uninterested* and *disinterested* (what does he make of the OED entries for the two words?), and continued with Sir Alfred Ayer falling out of his chair during stabbing attempts to read the teleprompter; this week was Howard's turn.

When the videocassette revolution comes, I hope the BBC will issue a tape of all these *Word for Word* beefs, called something satirical like 'Defenders of the Language'. Look, the social historian of the future will be able to say, here is the Grumbling Levin, claiming that soon we will ask in a shop for a hat and be given a pair of trousers; here is the Tumbling Professor, babbling about other people's usage yet unable to get his own out of his mouth without diving off his stool in the process; and here is the Mumbling Howard, a victim of that old public-school disease, carried by Alec Douglas-Home, which involves holding the lower jaw completely rigid, not allowing a gap to show between the teeth, and letting the words sneak out with a slight whistle from between the canines (it's a posh version, in fact, of the Sree-Pawer). Listen, there he goes again, off on one of his favourite stiff metaphors about 'the restless and universal ocean of the English language'.

If Howard had watched *The World About Us* (BBC-2), he would have been shocked to notice that many of the minute yet dazzling, sun-reflecting droplets of this restless and universal ocean of his are actually being changed in meaning when they pass from English English into Papua New Guinea pidgin. As 'flag blonga Australia' was lowered and 'flag blonga you go big pilla on top', the newly independent nation displayed itself as a delightful palimpsest of languages and civilisations. Whether you read the occasion as a farewell to a century of colonial interference, or as a prediction of what our own multi-ethnic society might become, or both, it was a happy, unworrying experience. After an open-air mass, the priest took off the bits of fern draped round his midriff, then removed his Christian surplice, and underneath was found to be wearing a Hawaiian shirt. Pretty schoolgirls of varying colour sat around in blue gingham; local women put bits of shrubbery through their pierced ears and orchids in their hair ('We *must* put our flowers on properly,' one of them chided in the tones of a seam-straightening Western suburbanite); and everyone conversed like excited cattle-auctioneers: even when saying 'We are working hard building this house to get it ready for Independence Day', the delivery was that of a Monty Python drag housewife. And who could resist the story of the carved bowls which the Papuans kept sending to the Governor? They started sending them to him when they thought that such gifts might help procure independence; they carried on sending them, by way of celebration, when forthcoming independence was announced; and even after he indicated that he'd got enough carved bowls for several lifetimes, thank you very much, they continued their dogged generosity, and were filmed raucously loading up yet another landroverful of them.

Less exotically, BBC-2 also came up with two fine memoirs from the North East. In *Connie*, a spry 84-year-old suffragette retailed her crimes of 60 years ago with charming moral certainty (she was once offered equipment by a miner to help blow up one of the piers of Durham Cathedral, but 'I declined that opportunity because I was not happy about my ability to handle explosives'). *Wilf Mannion* told the life of the great inside forward who now works as a labourer at South Bank steelworks, and its original, pre-network screening has inspired a campaign to make Middlesbrough FC offer him a belated testimonial. If he gets a few thousand as a result, fine; but the main interest of John Mapplebeck's film wasn't in its rags-to-rags pathos (in any case, Mannion appears to live a modest, contented life in a neat house with an adored wife), but in its grainy reminder of the forgettable truth that the past may actually, in some respects, be better than the present. The comments of Mannion's contemporaries – 'Watch his hands', 'He had radar in his fingertips', 'He was just like a ballerina' – went deeper than nostalgia; such remarks, plus the odd clip of Mannion trapping a lobbed ball, feinting, and moving off in another direction, all in one sweet motion, disposed of the easy belief that skill only came in with the light ball, light boots, protective referees and action replays. Mannion worked with a heavy ball, heavy boots and clogging opponents; with a twitch of a body swerve, and by allowing the ball to run, he could take out three opponents.

Yet the most striking difference between Mannion and today's ballerinas was that he was always a team man. His greatest match (in the course of which he ran 15 yards with the ball on his forehead, let it slide down his back, then flipped it up over his head and booted it into the net) remains in his memory as 'a bad game': he was showing off because his fiancée had come to watch him. Such demeanour and values made an interesting contrast with those of Geoffrey Boycott, given a free 20 minutes on *Parkinson* (BBC-1) with the *Sunday Times* jock-sniffer lobbing him underarm half-volleys. Strange how Parky failed to bring up

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the main reason why the inept Yorkshire committee sacked him (he hasn't won anything for eight years), nor the small fact that Boycott managed to captain England to their only ever defeat against New Zealand.

Did many non-Yorkshire fans ring up and protest? And did anyone, the next night, phone up about *Day Voices, Night Voices* (BBC-1), the sort of vague, sententious programme about ghetto survivors which makes *Holocaust* necessary (though it did contain one chilling shot: of Friesian cattle on an Israeli kibbutz with numbers tattooed on their backs). I ask, because after watching *Look Here* (LWT), I plan to get less excited about SWITCHBOARD JAMMED BY PROTEST CALLS headlines. Andrew Neil, the man with the most improbable haircut on television (all gauzily thinned at the front, but solid as a Viennese cake at the sides) interviewed David Cox, editor of *Weekend World*, about an animated-cartoon war-game they had shown a couple of weeks ago which 'predicted' a Middle East escalation ending in nuclear war. The LWT switchboard, according to Neil, couldn't handle all the calls, and he asked Cox if the cartoon clip hadn't been a bit too sensational. 'Well, that's a view,' replied Cox calmly, 'and if that's your view, that's your view.' He couldn't have put it more plainly if he'd answered, 'Piss off, fruitcake.' A little fierce, it seemed, not to say confident, until Cox let drop the actual figures: there were 35 protest calls, of which only two mentioned the cartoon. Allowing for the usual Middle East rentagrouse callers, the number seemed wholly unexceptional.

I wonder whether Mrs Whitehouse, her dog and the neighbours' parrot managed to jam the switchboard about another of *Look Here*'s items: a report on the home video boom which suggested that the two likely growth-areas of the cassette (apart from satirical linguistics, that is) are likely to be educational programmes and pornography: 'taboo TV' is the phrase already invented to cover this latter form of home entertainment. Neil then introduced a tediously full-dress clip from an American cassette of *Deep Throat*, though from the glinty look in his eye you couldn't help concluding that he'd copped a load of the rest of it as well. In anticipation of the videocassette explosion, and the hope of providing the fullest possible service for NS readers, I'm putting in to the Editor this week for a VCR.

Sport

Russell Davies

Schisms and Scrums

You see? It's no good suggesting, as I did last week (I was only trying to help), that we should all leave Geoffrey Boycott alone. He won't leave himself alone. Encouraged by Michael Parkinson, whose willingness to sympathise with wayward geniuses doesn't prevent him from capitalising journalistically on their recklessness of mouth (remember the 'intimate biography' of George Best?), Boycott has Really Torn It This Time. While sports editors all over the country were queueing up to throw rotten veg at the Yorkshire Committee, Boycott had only to sit on a park-bench somewhere and be photographed looking as sorry for himself as he doubtless deserved to be. Instead, he stepped up to the head of the willing mob and hurled in a furry basketful of his own. Collapse and dispersal of disinterested sympathisers. Even the *Guardian*, which had published, a few days before, a tremblingly passionate editorial on the heartlessness of Boycott's employers, felt embarrassed enough to recast its opinions on the matter in a jokey ecclesiastical-historical mould: Papal schisms and such. 'Yet it is only when schism enters the innermost of mankind's concerns', oozed their editorial revisionist, 'that it acquires heroic, and tragic, proportions. That, in sum, is what we are now being called upon to witness.' Giggle giggle, squirm squirm.

As a matter of fact, there was something to be said for the *Guardian*'s analogy, before they let it run to seed. There is a touch of the Vatican, a whiff of white smoke, about Boycott's theology. He would like us to believe that he's still a good old Fundamentalist, for whom God is Yorkshire. Just to serve Yorkshire, and minister to Its needs, is supposed to be very bliss. But it is now plain that Boycott has come to regard himself as the Chief Believer in this touching old creed. This is another queue he has jumped. In his own eyes, he becomes Yorkshire's fleshly representative, militant here in Earth: an appointee for the duration of his (sporting) life; a personage to whom a certain amount of the old perpetual obeisance is due. In justification of this, his apparent sacrifice is to identify his own interests completely with those of Yorkshire; but when you come down to it, the amount of humility and negation-of-self involved here is negligible. All Boycott has done – and I would expect this to come out when the Yorkshire Committee drably unveils the promised 'details' this week – is to make the grand assumption that a good performance by Boycott, judged in Boycott's terms, is necessarily good for Yorkshire. It was this attitude that led to the much-publicised ructions this last summer, when John Hampshire led a demonstration of slow scoring in protest against Boycott's own self-seeking crawl earlier in the innings.

Boycott sincerely wants to 'do his best for Yorkshire', but he insists not only on the word 'best' but on 'his' as well. The hero-worshippers of the county have long encouraged him in this. They have prolonged his adolescence. Now they are going to have to duck out of the way for a bit while the psychiatrists, social workers, industrial arbitrators, moral philosophers and contract-carrying Australian touts cluster round. For the second week running, I leave them to get on with it, and hope that Yorkshire, for their own peace of mind, have at least subjected their new Pope to a thorough medical.

I am actually far more worried about rugby football, a sport for which I have conceived one of those sketchy armchair enthusiasms that TV insidiously inspires. Most of the game still seems to me a mess. Ruck and maul, and even line-out and scrum, strike me merely as names for differently-ordered starting points from which to arrive at the same chaos. Only the rare player, brilliantly gifted in movement, can cut a bold line across the mêlée, forcing his colleagues briefly into an answering pattern of service and support. Then some huge clown with knicker-elastic round his head sits on the gifted player's face, and chaotic gloom descends again, permanently, as like as not.

Three players who could be relied upon to impose patterns upon the watcher's eye, even if not upon certain of their dunderheaded team-mates, were Gerald Davies, Gareth Edwards and Phil Bennett, all of whom have suddenly retired – the first two completely, and Bennett from the international game. This leaves the likes of me, who would prefer a brisk walk to the experience of a 'dour forward battle' with Bill Maclaren howling over the top of it, with not a lot to look forward to this season. One watched these three players precisely because their balance and foresight, informing their marvellous wrong-footing twitches of the hurtling body, could be relied upon to make fools of method and beef. We seem to be in for plenty of beefy method this season.

What survived of the Cardiff v. Newport match on last Sunday's 'Rugby Special' programme looked leaden; and with no outstanding players about to make the duffers ashamed of their lungings, chaos looked like descending again soon. One man was sent off for a retaliatory kick, but only after opposing forwards had piled into a ruck with a scrape-scrape of giant boots: it looked like a pack of seaside yobs treading down a sandcastle. In the main match, North Midlands versus the Argentine tourists, a brawl developed such as may eventually give soccer a good name. The ref picked two men out and sent them off – a big 'un on one side and a little 'un on the other. It looked a symbolic rather than a convinced decision. The game itself would have remained largely pointless if the Argentine's one apprentice genius, Porta, had not been highly adept at kicking round corners.

Derek Mahon

Heraclitus on Rivers

Nobody steps into the same river twice.
The same river is never the same
Because that is the nature of water.
Similarly your changing metabolism
Means that you are no longer you.
The cells die; and the precise
Configuration of the heavenly bodies
When she told you she loved you
Will not come again in this lifetime.

You will tell me that you have executed
A monument more lasting than bronze;
But even bronze is perishable.
Your best poem, you know the one I mean,
The very language in which the poem
Was written, and the idea of language,
All these things will pass away in time.

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Perhaps we have seen the best of rugby for a while. Perhaps we have just come through a golden age, after which temporarily beguiled fans like me will drop away again and leave rugby to its former adherents, the participants themselves. I hope not. But the lesson of the recent boom certainly seems to be that really top-class running backs with all the tricks are not only what the people want to see, but constitute the only element in the game that will keep the minds of seven-foot forwards on the job, and off the next opportunity to kick an opponent in the loose.

Art

John Spurling

Under a Bushel

The Pier Gallery Collection *Tate*
Mackintosh Watercolours *Fine Art Society*

In Truffaut's dismal science-fiction film *Fahrenheit 451* the Fire Service no longer puts out fires but burns books. It may be that the function of a public art gallery will eventually be to keep its works of art concealed; not for any moral reason, but in the name of conservation. It sounds absurd? Go to the Tate and see how it's already under the thumb of its Conservation Department. You'd better not go alone. Take a powerful torch with you.

The current exhibition is of a private collection of mostly British 20th-century art which the owner, Margaret Gardiner, has presented to the Orkneys. Before being permanently displayed in the specially built Pier Arts Centre, the collection is visiting London and four Scottish cities, Aberdeen, Glasgow, Dundee and Edinburgh. Since many of the works in the collection are by artists with Cornish associations there was some surprise at the owner's decision to send it to the opposite corner of the British Isles, but as the Tate's Director, Sir Norman Reid, writes in his foreword to the catalogue:

> It may well prove that Alfred Wallis's boats will float as happily within the sound of the sea in Stromness, Orkney (in which fortunate town the collection will be housed) and the light fall as kindly as in the south on the brilliant early works by Barbara Hepworth and Ben Nicholson which form the main part of the collection.

It depends what he means by 'kindly'. Such light as does fall in the south is so inadequate as to make a piece of pink ancaster stone carved by Hepworth look like concrete.

The essential pleasure of these works lies in their reconstitution of open-air experience, especially the light and surface textures of Cornwall. Hepworth's *Oval Sculpture* is made of plane wood, its outside dry, cracked and bleached like driftwood, its inside hollowed out into a series of interlocking cavities and painted a dazzling white; Nicholson's *1934 (painting)* is a pair of white discs superimposed on various tones of grey with a panel of glowing reddish-brown in one corner; Lanyon's *Box Construction* uses gelatine filters against glass to achieve actual translucency; Heron's *Small Red Square with Green and Yellow* is a piece of legerdemain in which the colours glisten like boiled sweets or stones picked out of the sea. All this is still visible at the Tate, true, but not nearly visible enough. When it comes to darker, deliberately coarser things, such as Hilton's *Brown, Yellow and Black* or Nicholson's *three circles*, which suggest themselves as outdoor objects, weather-stained, half-natural finds, and which are meant precisely to establish an opposition to brilliance, to glower instead of to glow, the Kremlin-corridor quality of the Tate's lighting is ruinous. Two of the finest paintings in the collection – Keith Vaughan's Braque-like *Still-Life with Pears* and Poliakoff's blue and green *Composition* – are less directly affected, since their virtues are of a more urbane, indoor kind, but one is left wondering what possible end is served by conserving for a month works which have up to now hung insouciantly in a private house in Hampstead and are about to decamp to the Orkneys. Surely they don't have a conservation department there?

This year is the 50th anniversary of the death of the remarkable Scottish architect and designer, Charles Rennie Mackintosh. The occasion is being used by Roger Billcliffe, Keeper of Fine Art at Glasgow Art Gallery, to draw attention to Mackintosh's watercolours, with which he began and ended his career. Billcliffe has mounted a definitive exhibition, already seen in Glasgow and Edinburgh, and has also published a thoroughly illustrated book (John Murray £10) with a *catalogue raisonné*. Mackintosh himself made no distinction between his various activities. 'The architect,' he said in a lecture,

> must become an art worker . . . the art worker must become an architect . . . the draftsman of the future must be an artist . . . Art is the flower – Life is the green leaf. Let every artist strive to make his flower a beautiful living thing – something that will convince the world that there may be – there are – things more precious – more beautiful – more lasting than life.

His own flower-paintings are much his best. One of his more successful early *art nouveau* paintings – depicting a tall, dark-haired, matronly lady with an entranced expression who becomes entangled half-way down in a labyrinthine rosebush – is called *Part Seen, Imagined Part*. Flowers seem to have given him that balance between the seen and the imagined that he needed; whether he is painting small, delicate studies of wild-flowers or rich profusions of cut-flowers in surprising vases, his skill at converting the chaotic fragility of the real into the ordered permanence of a two-dimensional design is unfailing. He never wholly succeeded in doing the same thing with landscape, which he turned to mainly in the Twenties, after his retirement from architecture and removal to France. Skies never interested him at all and even though he more or less eliminated them from the later landscapes, he still got bogged down in too-literal renderings of buildings and objects such as a farm-cart and a pile of logs. It was not that he was an abstractionist manqué – in spite of his interesting near-abstract treatments of fields, roads, water and rocks – but that landscape never seems to have awakened the sense of mystery in him that flowers did.

This English

Not satisfied with their inability to write correct English, many people like to branch out and make mistakes in other languages too. We start with a This French and a This Latin; and follow with two howlers from representatives of the bureaucracy (can we have even more of these?) and a telling near-homophone.

☐ Any sketch of David Glass's work would be incomplete without reference to his *amour propre*, the history of his subject. **Obituary** *The Times* (Philip Larkin)

☐ In each of these books we have its author's *apologia pro vitae suae* in the Central Intelligence Agency. **George Gale** *Spectator* (John Wardle)

☐ Accidents soon happen – Dents and scratches cost money to repair. All drivers are respectively requested to drive slowly and carefully. *Warfield Park Community Association Committee Bulletin* (N. Elles)

☐ Please bring this card with you, also early morning specimen of urine, medical card or passport. *Willesden General Hospital appointment card* (R. F. Laske)

☐ Mr Payne said that because of the serious harm caused by drug abuse, the police had determined to search out and arrest those pedalling 'hard' or 'soft' drugs. **Tom Sharratt** *Guardian* (Elizabeth O'Brien)

Films

John Coleman

Turnip Time

Ludwig (AA) *Screen on the Hill*
Violette et François (X) *Gala Royal*
Pete's Dragon (U) *Odeon, St Martin's Lane*
Slavers (X) *Filmcenta, Charing Cross Road*

Currently being promoted as Visconti's 'lost masterpiece', *Ludwig* was never – to my knowledge – lost, merely tactfully shelved, and bears about as much relation to a masterpiece as do the other turnips on this week's bill of fare. One is aware of talking in rather a loud voice where a reverential hush will be felt by several lovers of art cinema to be more in order, but the late Duke of Modrone rarely rose, in my estimation, much above the level of high-class illustrator. At his nodding worst, he would have made a lovely window-dresser. Apart from an airing at the 1976 London Film Festival, when few saluted, the retrieved movie has been kicking its heels for six years. Running now at two-and-a-quarter hours, the original version was, I believe, some 40 minutes longer. A trip to Haverstock Hill and the lucky metropolitan can complete his Visconti set.

By a curious chance, the director and his subject prove something of a match for each other. Loony Ludwig II, King of Bavaria, a relatively short-lived phenomenon of the second half of the 19th century, squandered his wealth on Wagner, encrusted *objets d'art*, a grotto out of *Tannhäuser*, and castles. He turned the conventional timetable upside down, sleeping all day and rising at midnight. He delighted in artificial light and large-scale vulgarity. A conspicuous consumer, he had many of the in-built attributes of a certain kind of moviemaker. Visconti chose to present this sad, trivial aesthete, garbed in an iron petulance, through a series of 'beautiful' com-

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positions, often little more than *tableaux vivants* with benefit of sound-track and, whenever the slow-paced action moved outside, with plenty of weather. Dubbed into English, the dialogue suffers but one doubts if it was ever really well. 'There has not been such a brilliant gathering . . . for many years,' yaps an old court lady dutifully, gazing enrapt at the king and four or five others. 'Anyone with sensitive nerves like me has headaches,' explains Trevor Howard as Wagner. It is Romy Schneider as Ludwig's cousin, Elizabeth of Austria, who alone imports a mocking astringency that shows the inert playing around her for what it is. But even she is reduced to a feed at one point. 'Is it true? You have never had a woman?' Helmut Berger's Ludwig isn't having that. 'I am a Catholic,' he bridles.

Jacques Ruffio's *Violette et François* features Isabelle Adjani of the shelving upper lip as half of a couple of young lovers with an 18-month-old son: the other half is a blank-faced fellow called Jacques Dutronc. I got fed up with their feckless charm early on when Adjani, rushing impetuously into Dutronc's arms, dumped the little crawler outside on a dangerous landing. And she is supposed to be the level-headed one, comparatively. Paris and youth being what they are today, the pair find it hard to hold on to jobs, she with her upper-middle insouciance and he with his broken-home *jemenfoutisme*. So they start pinching things from shops. François turns up with a red dress she had fancied and is soon stuffing food-tins down the baby's jumper. When Violette tries the false pregnancy bit, François remonstrates: most unprofessional.

There are moderately touching appearances from Serge Reggiani and Lea Massari as François' separated parents, put in presumably for codgers of my generation: we get some authentic old-fashioned acting here. And the kids marry one day, in a bid for seriousness. But the small, interesting core of this lackadaisical enterprise is in the near-documentary details of shop-lifting. A fur coat, taken outside, sets off an alarm and the boutique lady shows them the metal tag, inside the lining, that did the trick. Violette is caught swiping scent and made to sign a form admitting her guilt: a painful little scene. Back home again, she takes a shower as if to wash away the stigma, still hearing the woman store-detective's voice over. Then François is picked up via a TV monitoring screen, resists arrest and the flics are summoned. In court, a barrister buddy of his pitches a tear-jerking tale of François' ruinous childhood. Violette and his dad look on stupefied while François is hugely amused. It is a tribute to M. Ruffio's uncertain direction that he may have intended us to be laughing too. A suspended sentence and a fine; the couple at last break up; François tightwalks a bridge parapet at night, to jump down – of course – safely on to the road. I could have done with a splash.

Don Chaffey's *Pete's Dragon*, set – nay, congealed – in turn-of-the-century Maine, seems to have lost 20 minutes on its way to the home of Disney in St Martin's Lane. You might call the result a mixed blessing, with the great, green, simpering and *good* Elliott coming courtesy of Ken Anderson and his animators, and the humans – Mickey Rooney, Red Buttons, Jim Dale and a wholesome lass called Helen Reddy – assembled from all over. Shelley Winters does a 'U'-type Bloody Mama as head of the villainous Gogan family who are chasing nine-year-old orphan Pete (Sean Marshall and this side saccharine); Mr Dale and Mr Buttons are a quack doctor and his assistant, aiming to chop the dragon up into saleable morsels; Mr Rooney and Miss Reddy harbour Pete; and old Elliott saves his skin and the day. Everyone keeps on bursting out *singing*, I can't think why. Trevor Howard crops up again in Jürgen Goslår's appalling *Slavers*, as the biggest trader in black bodies of them all, back in 1884 somewhere in Africa. Unpleasant torture scenes and a script strictly from hunger disqualify this from consideration. Otherwise, a word of praise for Mr Howard's surely improvised cussing: 'Where *is* she? Where's the Swedish whore?' he howls every so often, inquiring after Britt Ekland.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Vox Pap

Future Shock *Round House*
The Night of the 20th *Theatrespace*
Nightfall *Theatre Upstairs*

It takes some skill to throw out the one member of the audience who is palpably enjoying your show, but the Round House staff brought off the feat last week. The gentleman in question was cheering the 'world's first living magazine', clapping to its music, repeating its less witless aperçus and, at moments of special delirium, scurrying up to the edge of the stage to greet those on it; and his reward, poor fellow, was to be lifted from his seat by the local heavies and manoeuvred through a door marked 'exit'. The full folly, and perhaps hypocrisy, of their action became clear a bit later, when the performers decided that participation was wanted after all and brightly invited the audience to join in some spoof vox pop. There was all the usual skulking, cringing and pretending to be invisible as the mike went its rounds. 'And what do you believe in, sir?' 'Money.' 'And you?' 'Oil.' 'And you, sir?' 'Me, I Swedish.' Those self-professed improvisers who claim to be able to control an audience unrehearsed should cope with the one actually presented to them, not one with the tricky bits filleted out.

Never mind. The real trouble is that John Saxby's *Future Shock*, which struck me as weedy when I caught it at Edinburgh last year, hasn't been improved by all the extra loot and sweat that has since been thrust into it. A strip-cartoon about a young couple whose marriage is wrecked by sexual equality and permissiveness is still slotted into a series of skits about artistic fashion, ton-up religion and the plastic family; and it's all still marked by the same dread of change, the same dereliction of imagination and humour. The Spanish Civil War reappears in a still-inexplicable flashback. There is one lively song, which is still 'I'm a temporary true believer'. The programme, quoting Alvin Toffler, warns us of 'the dizzying disorientation brought on by the premature arrival of the future': the show itself contrives to make the future look stale, predictable, and disorientating only to the eyelids.

Yehoshua Sobol's *Night of the 20th*, so its programme tells us, was 'the unanimous choice for Best Play of the Year' in Israel, a tribute that was surely based on respect for its subject, not faith in its excellence. Clearly, the arrival in the Palestine of the early 1920s of Zionist radicals from mid-Europe, determined to resist the Arab 'serfs' and establish the homeland Balfour had promised them, is of considerable importance in Israeli history. Conceivably, the troubled utopianism of these pioneers is of special interest today, given the presence of so many of their spiritual heirs in Sinai and other disputed territory. But that is not quite enough to transform what is, at best, an animated discussion into effective drama.

Part of the trouble is the gum-paralysing dialogue, the verbal novocaine that Sobol shoots into the compliant mouths of his characters. Part is that these characters fling themselves into furious arguments about sex and patriotism, the claims of the individual and those of the group, before they have the least solidity as people. Only at the end, when the post boy from Vienna is haranguing the rich bourgeois's son about the supremacy of personal relationships over political action, do we begin to suspect that there might be vital organs somewhere beneath those quivering diaphragms and palpitating breasts; and by then it is too late. And the third part of the trouble is the shrill saminess of the acting. I'm sorry to have to say this, because the company responsible is a new one, Jewish Living Drama, among whose brave aims is the foundation of a Jewish cutural centre in Britain; and, in its defence, I should add that its members aren't helped by being jammed cheek-by-jowl on a stage that turns out to be hardly more than a shelf at the far end of a deepish cupboard. And who knows? Given space, time, rather more finesse, and a direc-

Tom Paulin

Anonymous Biography

It seems, from his notebook, that in April
he caught a train to the capital
(the rainfall was above average that spring
so he could have worn one of the new
quilted raincoats which were then
in fashion).

A loose sheet notes the shape of a
girl's face;
a cross in the margin shows he achieved
full sexual intercourse on that visit.
Also he ate a large dinner at his club
and swopped ghost stories with a
velvet bishop.

We know where his grave is. And we know
that his past holds no surprises – there are
the usual dirty secrets, guesses, and possible
mysteries, but they are dry and done with.
And yet, when we watch this
entangled spirit

falling in love or going off on a long
journey, a *winterreise*, there is this
strange difference. It is as though
any moment he may come walking
up the street, carrying a bottle of wine

and looking as happy as himself.

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tor whose imagination isn't a kind of blunt weapon, the enterprise may have a future.

Nightfall is the whimsical concoction of a travelling group called Lumière and Son, which, to judge from the puzzled faces around me, could usefully sacrifice some of its son for a little extra lumière. Five strapping lads and lasses eke away their days in a row of twee dwellings, half Wendy houses, half beach-huts, each fronted by a patch of earth from which a withered leaf dolefully sprouts. They perform little social rituals, they quarrel, they enact nightmares in which monsters stalk the stage wearing fishtanks for hats or potatoes instead of heads. Eventually, they begin to celebrate their annual Dolly Day, which consists of displaying mannikins and loudly denouncing their own sins. But this year, for the first time, the litany of remorse doesn't progress very far. In fact, they halt it in disgust. And this is evidently the right thing to do, because huge cabbages appear in their front-gardens; and we leave the cast joyously dousing itself with the water these vegetables quaintly contain.

You see? Reject humdrum habit, disown tradition, abandon guilt, and life will magically become fruitful and fulfilling. All and sundry will be transformed into human dolphins, frolicking with aquatic cabbages. By the end, I was troubled not so much by the vagueness of the symbolism as by the triteness of the sermon it seemed designed to project, and not so much by the triteness of the sermon as by the condescension of the attitudes behind it.

'... like a mackerel in the moonlight; he shines and he stinks'

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ROUTLEDGE & KEGAN PAUL

Weekend Competition

No 2536 **Set by Sredni Vastar**

There's an ad in the window of my village shop which runs: 'FOR SALE. Two female ferrets and a baby's cot.' Devise similar *thought-provoking ads. Maximum four tries* each; by 27 October.

Result of No 2533 **Set by A. Boteman**

We asked you to imagine what would have happened if T. S. Eliot had written part of the *Alexandria Quartet*, or Lawrence Durrell one of the *Four Quartets*.

Report **by Fat Jeff**

One of the smarter design features of the comp complex is the location of the sick bay: it's placed two-thirds of the way up the stairs from the sorting office to the inner reception area, where Keith, Len, the Kid and I indulge in some preliminary grading (often quite capriciously – we might turn against, say, second-class stamps one week, or entries unaccompanied by gratuities the next). Leaning over the gilded balcony at the top of the stairwell, we listen for the snap of a sorter's ligament, the dry wrench of a dislocated shoulder, and, occasionally, the massive avalanche of pain when a whole team of sorters, roped together for safety, are brought crashing down by the foolish ambitions of their guide. Then, a second string of mailmen will have to be dispatched up the stair that grown men have come to call Death Valley. This time, as we strained to catch the weekly snap, pop and crackle, we only heard a tripping step and a cheery whistle: Oleg, our youngest trainee sorter, was bringing the week's entries *by himself*: a mere few dozen of them. We kicked him downstairs for his pains of course (bringers of bad news and all that) and tore at the sack. No need to worry; wise Spiro was right again – diamonds often come in small containers. You shall be well rewarded: a Wellington plus three Newtons each.

I shall begin again. Shall I begin again?

Spring enfolded in the heart of winter.
The one who is many, viewed by many,
Who themselves are fleeting impressions
In time, past and future, ever present.
Steam in the sunlight suspended
Plumes the bed where intercourse ended.
Birth, death, copulation; the only certainties.
Copulation, here, now, all ways.
In every end someone else's is beginning.

Tony Miles

Chess

No 104 **August Problems**

The August problems were another simple lot. In **Problem 94 (2r1r1k1 / 1p4bp / p2p1qp1 / 1n1P4 / 2P1B2P / 1N1Q4 / PP2R3 / 1K5R)** Black elegantly wins two pawns by 1 . . . RxP!; 2.QxR, QxPch! 3.RxQ, N-R6ch; 4.K-B1, BxRch; 5.KxB, NxQch and RxB. White's only real alternative is 2.B-B3 (or N2) when Black has a variety of wins. For example . . . RxR; 3.QxR, N-R6ch; 4.PxN (or K-R1, N-B7ch; 5.K-N1, QxPmate) Q-B4ch; 5.B-K4, RxB; etc. However, there is one try that doesn't work, namely 2.B-B3, RxR; 3.QxR, Q-B4ch; 4.K-R1, BxPch? 5.QxB (Not 5.KxB, Q-B3ch; 6.K-N1, N-R6 mate) R-B7; 6.B-N4! and if Q-K5, B-K6ch. This little counter-trick cost a couple of entrants dearly.

Problem 95 (3r2k1 / p4ppp / 4p3 / 2b1n3 / Q1qNP3 / P5P1 / 5PKP / B2R4) held no such traps. 1.NxP wins instantly.

Problem 96 (4r1k1 / pp3p1p / 3P2p1 / 5b2 / 3Q4 / P2qB2P / 5PP1 / R5K1) was a little trickier. The correct continuation is 1.P-Q7! R-Q1 (best) 2.Q-B6! and now if RxP; 3.B-R6, Q-Q5; 4.R-K1! B-K3; 5.RxB forces mate, while 2 . . . QxP fails to either 3.B-N5, R-K1; 4.B-R6 or 4.B-B4 (intending B-K5) R-K1 (or Q-Q5, B-K5;) 5.B-R6. Mr G. Abrahams suggested a clever alternative: 1.Q-B6, R-K3; (else B-Q4) 2.Q-Q8ch, K-N2; 3.P-Q7, R-Q3; 4.R-K1, RxP; (or BxP, B-B5) 5.Q-B8ch!! KxQ; 6.B-R6ch and R-K8mate. Unfortunately this isn't convincing. For example 3 . . . RxB; 4.PxR, QxPch; 5.K-R1, Q-Q5 gives Black an easy draw, and the attempted improvement 4.Q-N5!? allows Q-Q5! 5.P-Q8=Q, (if R-QB1, R-Q6 wins) QxRch; 6.K-R2, Q-K4ch; and, despite the two queens, Black stands no worse.

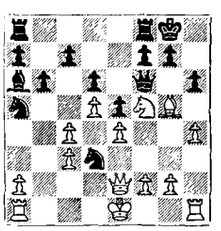
Problem 97 (r4rk1 / p1p2pp1 / bp1p1q1p / n1nPpN2 / 2P1P2P / 2PB4 / P2BQPP1 / R4K1R) was taken from a much-published recent game Kruger-Iskov, except that I moved the white king from K1 to KB1. In the problem White wins by 1.B-N5! PxB; 2.PxP, QxP; 3.Q-R5! and if QxQ; 4.N-K7ch and 5.RxQ mate. This was also the conclusion of the game, except that Black struggled on with 3 . . . NxBch (K now on K1) 4.K-B1, QxPch; 5.KxQ, N-B5ch; 6.K-B3 before resigning (NxQ, N-K7ch is still mate). However, while setting the problem a question occurred to me: What happens if Black notices 3.Q-R5! and defends with 1 . . . NxBch? Then 2.QxN, PxB; 3.PxP, QxP; 4.Q-R3, P-B3 is no good. neither is 2.K-Q2 (PxB; 3.PxP, QxP ch), nor 2.K-Q1 (4.Q-R5, QxQ ch). So 2.K-B1, but now the situation has changed. Black has possibilities like 2 . . . BxP or 2 . . N-B5, and White can try Q-N4 perhaps. I found several fascinating lines where Black gives up his queen for a lot of loose change (two or three minor pieces and a pawn or two), but could reach no firm conclusion. Therefore to make life easier for solvers, I moved the King to KB1.

August Prizewinners

Messrs Kwiatkowski, Neelakantan, Allen, Deshmukh, Garfath, Taylor, Cornforth & Sobey (£5 each)

Consolation prizes to Messrs Chand, Ram Mohan, Sahasrabudhe, Burkett & Hughson (£2 each)

Problem 104



See problem 97 above. White to play.

1) You may notice in my analysis I overlooked something. What? How should the game go?

2) In doing so I inadvertently stumbled on an intriguing position. Analyse the diagram after 1.K-B1. Answers to me at the New Statesman postmarked not later than 25 October.

Solution to Problem 102

White wins by 1.K-K5! and if P-R8=Q; 2.R-N7ch, K-B1; 3.P-R7, Q-R7ch; 4.K-K6! So 1 . . . K-B2! 2.P-R7! K-N2; 3.P-R8=Qch! KxQ; 4.K-B6!! P-R8=Q; (If K-N1; 5.K-N6, K-B1; 6.R-B5ch or K-R2; 5.R-R5ch) 5.K-B7! N-N6; 6.K-N6! and there is no defence to R-N8mate.

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All shall be well when fig and olive wand are one.
Shall I begin again? I shall begin again.

ROY KELLY

I came this way; down the valley into the little chapel and thought of other places. One of the sea jaws where the lengthening rays of the afternoon sun smear the esplanade. And now here in this moment mosque, temple and chapel meet. In the chapel silence I ask why in this great cobweb Time should three men crucified on a hill be one with her? She who lies here with her sex-broken body beside the handbag, full of french letters and belladonna. I recall the entry in her diary written in Rome: 'We are one with the dead and the living and every act of love is a beginning and an end; the way up is the way down. If you begin at the end of Roma you have Amor. So the dead are alive – even when the body ceases its labours and timeless spiritus takes over.'

P. W. R. FOOT

Here I am, a desiccated, old, young man,
Threading my way through vice-infested streets,
The odorous retreats
Of one-eyed whores and thieves and pimps
and spies.
In the room the women come and go
Talking of fellatio.
I am quite worn out with travel
And trying to unravel
This murderous space-time continuum.
I should have been a priceless *objet d'art*
Locked in some silent vault in Barclay's Bank.
I am not Mountolive nor was meant to be.
Oh, how can I assess
Or even try to guess
What Clea did to him or he to me?
The sultry city sings but not to me.

ROBERT BAIRD

What time is it? – that wonderful Hellenic question; its essence is lost in English. In the half-hushed corridor, the crumbling footsteps, like the furtive sounds of an old man's fingers as he unbuttons his blazer en route to the rose-garden. The door through which we never stepped, as if afraid of its speculative echoes. Memories? Memories: a thrush twisting an elegant, deceptive melody, like an echo of an unanswered question. I remember the obstinate but indolent flick of her finger as she brushed away the dust from an antique Ithacan bowl, in which she had hidden rose-leaves like treasured confetti. Why, I do not know. I learned early not to pry into her memories; it is the surreptitious trick of a writer rather than a lover to recover the eternal present of her diaries, converting them into words like a man presenting a stolen ticket at a pawn-shop for a handful of well-thumbed coins. But her time is unredeemable.

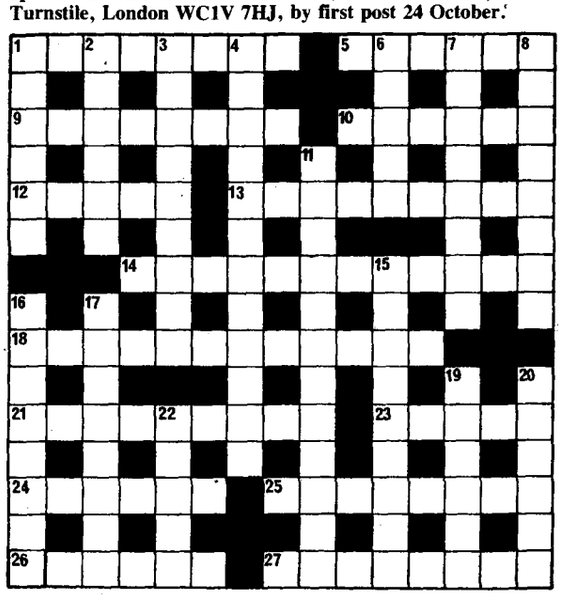
BILL GREENWELL

Here I am in the middle of a swamp
Pondering life and whether my KBE
Is assured in time future for time present.
It is not easy to remain a first secretary
When on a fish drive. It is picturesque but
Undignified; splashing in water is natural
for natives.
Talking to them in their own language
Reveals the extent of one's condescension,
But in an English accent of course
As a sense of superiority must be shown.
So here in the evening with Nasouz
And the sort of people one has always hoped
Not to meet at dinner, yet being quite glad to.
There is something very queer about Alexandria
And not only in the usual meaning of words.
I am apha plus in a delta nilus.

M. K. CHEESEMAN

Weekend Crossword 1279

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1279, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 24 October.



ACROSS

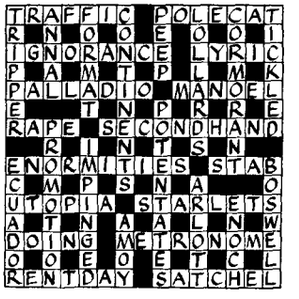
1. Priest embraces boy in church passage (8).
5. Of a university where hypocrisy leads to a degree being given back (6).
9. Wyss family (8).
10. Near the front of a tower is a chamber (6).
12. Letter of thanks after an article (5).
13. Put contents of it in a beer to cause intoxication (9).
14. Sowing in one kind of house and state (12).
18. Parties interchanging in turn reform countries (12).
21. Sally is holding a limb — how divine! (9).
23. Edict which makes this country like the East (5).
24. Consume daily about five with greed (6).
25. The steward is caught in company (8).
26. The member had dinner for the ambassador (6).
27. Girl sets out and looks glamorous (8).

DOWN

1. Equality for one in the group (6).
2. Masseur needed for lot of games (6).
3. Train once in a new style and box (9).
4. Grows abundantly after one is disseminated among the lower orders (12).
6. Better qualified in having a remarkable reading ability (5).
7. Place which gives thanks over a craze (8).
8. Birds even if there were a piece missing (8).
11. Hospital dance? It provides exercise (12).
15. An overweight girl gives notice (9).
16. Old general is in the war house (8).
17. Silver ringlets (8).
19. A politician in a northern town is for trial (6).
20. Outlets for dressmakers? (6).
22. 'Through the porch and —— of each sense' (Milton) (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1277



Prizewinners to No 1277

Mrs Hardiman (Richmond)
P. & C. Stubbs (St Albans)
Joan Berent (Switzerland)

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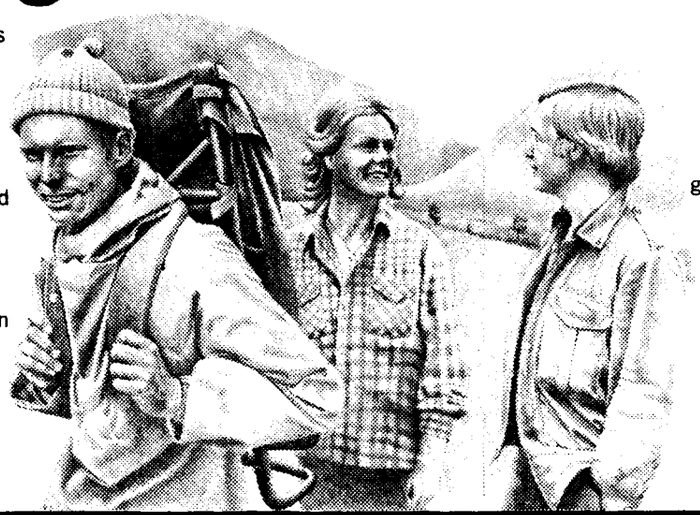

SALARY AND PROSPECTS
Graduate trainees are paid at present a salary of at least £2,823 which rises after training to £3,624 and then, on promotion, to £5,850 and above. Highest grades earn up to £9,817 (currently under review). Probation officers in the London area receive additional remuneration.

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NEW STATESMAN

Vol. 96 No. 2482

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Theatres

ALDWYCH THEATRE (Royal Shakespeare Company) 836 6404. Info 836 5332. New production Middleton & Rowley's 'The Changeling', 'As You Like It' and David Mercer's 'Cousin Vladimir' in repertoire. See daily press for dates and times. RSC also at The Warehouse in Stephen Pollakoff's 'Shout Across the River', Pete Atkin's 'A & R' and Peter Flannery's 'Savage Amusement'.

HAMPSTEAD THEATRE. 722 9301. Mon.-Fri. 8, Sats 5 & 8.30 'Gloo Joo', a new play by Michael Hastings directed by Michael Rudman. 'A passport to hilarity.' E. Standard.

NATIONAL THEATRE. 928 2252. 'The Woman', 'The Cherry Orchard', 'The Philanderer', 'Plunder', 'Plenty', 'American Buffalo'. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 928 2256.

ROYAL COURT. 730 1745. Eves 8, Sats 5 & 8.30. Nicol Williamson in John Osborne's 'Inadmissible Evidence'.

ARTS THEATRE. 836 3334

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PARIS PULLMAN, S. Ken. 373 5898. Banned in Iran for 3 years, Mehrju's 'The Cycle' (AA). Progs 3.50 (Sat & Sun), 6.05 & 8.20. Must end 25 October.

ICA, The Mall, SW1. 930 6393. 'Hollywood on Trial'. The story of the Hollywood Ten. From 10 Oct. daily at 9 p.m.

Meetings

THE CITY UNIVERSITY
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GRESHAM LECTURES IN DIVINITY
ASPECTS OF EARLY CHINESE RELIGIONS AND PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT

Three one-hour public lectures by Viscount Combermere BD MTH on Fridays 20 October, 27 October and 3 November at 1 p.m. All lectures are open to the public and free of charge.

GHALIB Poetry Society. For lectures on the poet of the East. S. Irfan, 01-733 4649.

'UNFOLDING CONSCIOUSNESS', a talk by Mrs Madge Hooper. Sunday 15 Oct. 7 p.m. The Theosophical Society in England, 50 Gloucester Place, London W1H 3HJ. Tel. 01-935 9261.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE, Blind Lane, Bourne End, Bucks, Sun. 15 Oct. Swami Tripurananda. 'Jesus of Nazareth and the Bhagavad-Gita' at 4 p.m. All welc. Vedanta mag. 50p.

THE CITY UNIVERSITY
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GRESHAM LECTURES IN LAW
DIRECTORS, SHAREHOLDERS, EMPLOYEES

Three one-hour public lectures by Professor C. M. Schmitthoff on Thursdays 19 October, 26 October and 2 November at 5.45 at Gresham College, Basinghall Street, EC2.

All lectures are open to the public and free of charge.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON (Gower St, WC1E 6BT). The Freud Memorial Lectures in Psychoanalysis by Dr. Joseph Sandler, 'Unconscious Wishes and Human Relationships', Monday, 23 October at 5.30 in Chemistry Auditorium, Christopher Ingold Laboratories, Gordon Street, WC1. Admission free, without ticket.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON, Gower St, WC1E 6BT. Lunch Hour Lectures, 1.20 to 2. 17 Oct. 'The problem of pain: mechanisms and treatments' by Prof. P. D. Wall; 19 Oct. 'Nuit et Brouillard' (Night and Fog). Film directed by Alain Resnais, France, 1955.

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Public Talk Sun. 15 Oct. 8 p.m. 'The Science of Magic'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2.

Courses

TALKING WITH CONFIDENCE. Courses with a difference. Week-end residential Courses to be held 10/12 Nov. and 24/26 Nov. Full particulars from C. Beloe, Senior Adviser, 16 St Mary's Gate, Derby.

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International Anti-Apartheid Year

DEMONSTRATE

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Publications

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LIBRARIES BOUGHT. Hammersmith Books, Barnes High St, London SW13. 01-876 7254.

WORLD HISTORY. Books bought & Catalogues issued on most areas. A. C. Hall, 30 Staines Road, Twickenham, Middx.

OUTPOSTS. Poems invited for future issues. Sae to Howard Sergeant, 72 Burwood Road, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, KT12 4AL.

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